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FEMINISM'S CHILDREN
Mary Eberstadt
PAKISTAN'S PROBLEM
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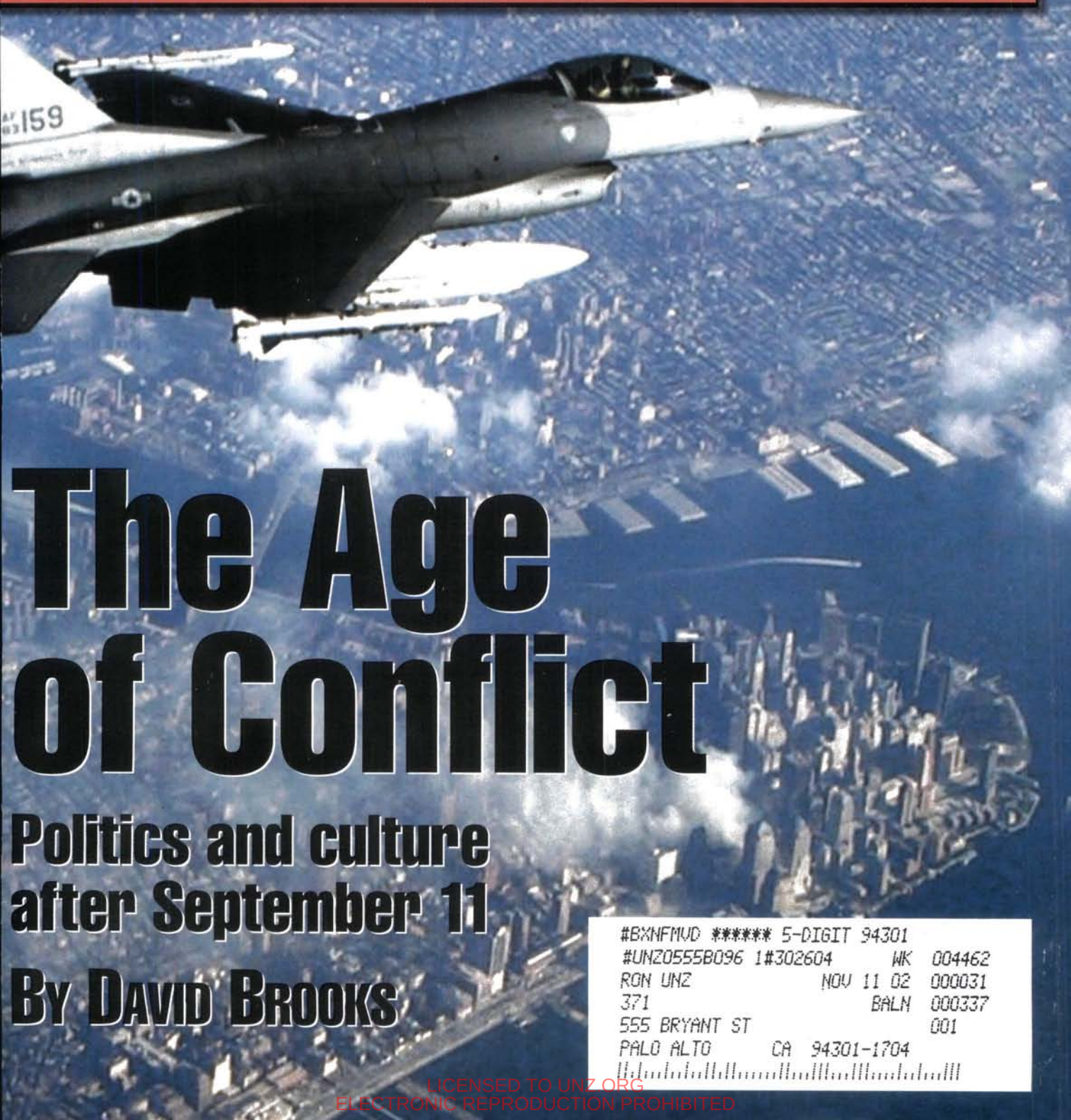

The Age of Conflict

Politics and culture after September 11

By David Brooks

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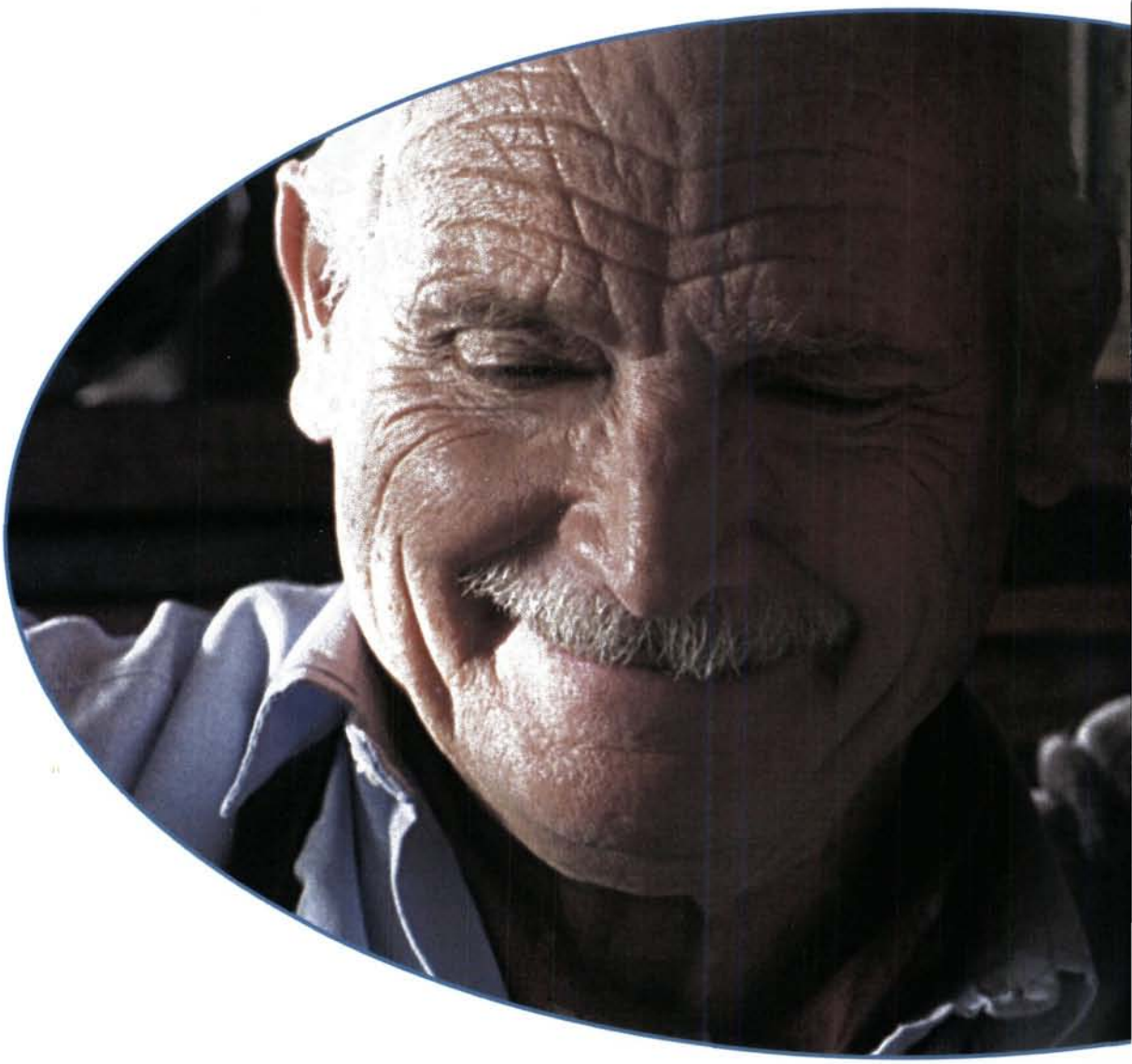

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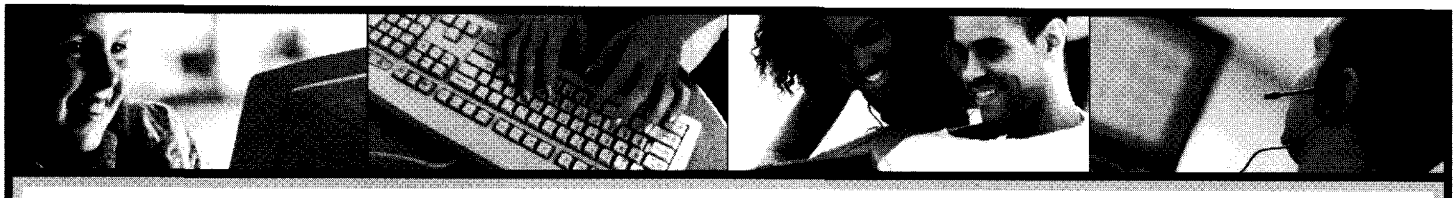

CREATING TOOLS FOR THE DIGITAL DECADE

Twenty-five years ago, when the personal computer industry was in its infancy, most software was developed in a matter of weeks — or even days — by small teams of developers. Microsoft products were distributed in plastic bags with typewritten labels. Customers who called with support questions were often put directly in touch with the programmer who wrote the software — sometimes a young man named Bill Gates.

Today, more than 500 million PCs are in use worldwide, and they have become an essential multipurpose tool in the workplace and at home — for communication, productivity, e-commerce and entertainment. PCs manage everything from the operation of giant corporations to family finances, and the software that makes it all happen is, in its complexity, elegantly sophisticated.

This week in New York, Microsoft will launch Windows XP, the most advanced operating system it has ever released. Over the last three years, hundreds of thousands of hours of research, planning, development and testing have gone into building a product that sets a new standard for efficient and dependable computing. It puts the exciting experiences of the digital age at people's fingertips, and creates opportunities for tens of thousands of companies around the world.

But it wasn't just Microsoft that built this new operating system. Today, creating rich, reliable and secure software is a partnership between many companies, big and small. In fact, nearly three-quarters of a million developers and users worked on the project; truly a number for the record books. Seldom, if ever, has a product been developed that has incorporated the ideas and creativity of so many people.

Software companies and developers helped make sure that the new operating system provides a flexible, yet powerful platform for thousands of other exciting products and services. Hardware manufacturers worked to make sure that devices such as digital cameras, portable music players and printers worked perfectly. And — most important of all — more than 300,000 individual product testers helped ensure that the software was easy to use, reliable and compelling.

This spirit of openness and collaboration pays off for everyone. Customers get cool, exciting software. Technology companies create even more opportunities for success. And the entire economy benefits from the amazing productivity, communication and entertainment capabilities of the PC. It's this very cycle of feedback and innovation that has made the PC industry so successful over the last 25 years, and such an important part of the nation's economy.

Today's computer programmers aren't much different from the people who wrote the very first PC applications. They may be a bit older and their hair may be a bit thinner, but they're every bit as passionate about how technology can improve people's lives — at work, at home and in school. Building great software is based on a foundation of enthusiasm, partnership and creativity — some of the many essential and enduring qualities of our great nation.

One in a series of essays on technology and society. More information is available at microsoft.com/issues.

Microsoft

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The Imams and the Jews

For an extremely disturbing portrait of the political climate in one of the premier mosques in America, see the interview by the *Forward*'s Rachel Donadio with Imam Abu-Namous, which is available on the web at *www.forward.com/issues/2001/01.10.26/news5.html.*

As Donadio explains, "Omar Saleem Abu-Namous became chief imam this month at New York's Islamic Cultural Center after his predecessor, Imam Mohammad Al-Gamei'a, mysteriously returned to Egypt" and subsequently blamed the September 11 attack on an international Jewish conspiracy headed by Israel's secret police. "The Islamic Cultural Center," Donadio explains, "opened in 1991 and was paid for by the governments of Kuwait, Libya, Saudi Arabia and Malaysia." So is the new guy an improvement? Hardly, as these excerpts from Donadio's interview make clear:

> Q: Imam Al-Gamei'a said that he thought the Jews were behind the attack and the Zionist media was trying to cover it up. What do you think of those views?
>
> A: His argument was that that kind of attack required technology beyond the capability of Osama bin Laden and Afghanistan. As a matter of fact, in the absence of definitive pieces of evidence, nobody can say for sure. I would not, for example, accuse any party. To be fair, I'd not accuse the Jews or the Muslims. Because no definitive proof has been given that any specific quarter or authority or organization did that.
>
> Q: Would you rule out that Jews did it?
>
> A: (laughs) That is, as a matter of fact, a question that I cannot say, that it was committed by Jews or non-Jews, because I don't have any evidence.
>
> Q: What about the 19 men who the government says took over the planes?
>
> A: According to reports, many of those 19 young men who were supposed to have died, many of them are still living, in point of fact. They reported to the mass media that they're still living. I think the reports were not precise, not 100 percent accurate.

Just to be clear, this is from the spiritual leader of a mosque, located at 96th Street and 3rd Ave. on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, and catering to an upscale community that includes Islamic members of the diplomatic corps. ♦

Anchors Away

There have been lots of jokes among newspeople about "anthrax envy"—the feeling on the part of TV anchors who didn't receive deadly envelopes of the bacteria that they had been left out. But the only documented case so far appears to be that of ABC's Carole Simpson, who has been suspended for two weeks from that network's Sunday edition of *World News Tonight* for a variety of indiscretions she uttered as the speaker at an International Women's Media Foundation luncheon.

As reported by *USA Today* TV columnist Peter Johnson, Simpson disclosed private details about a colleague's infant who had contracted cutaneous anthrax. "But what further angered [ABC execs] was that Simpson, who is based in ABC's Washington bureau, told the group that the anthrax attack had hit home in her very office. Simpson said that ABC News anchor Cokie Roberts had gotten a letter postmarked Trenton, N.J.—where several letters containing anthrax, sent to other media and to Capitol Hill, originated. In fact, no such letter existed."

Lesson to young anchors-in-training: When you "dine out on a story," make sure it's a true one.

Meanwhile, network newsrooms have also suffered their first case of anthrax bravado. CBS's Dan Rather made headlines last week by refusing to be tested for anthrax—despite the fact that his assistant had contracted the skin form.

As Rather told Larry King, "We are absolutely determined that we are not going to run scared." (King, you won't be surprised to learn, responded with this cliché du jour: "Hemingway described class as grace under pressure.") Plus which, Rather was consulting regularly with his personal doctor and with the New York City health department.

Now, while it may be admirable on the one hand to show a spirit of defiance to the anthrax attacker(s), it's a form of defiance that someone with a personal physician on call is in a uniquely cossetted position to send. What's more, it's probably the wrong message to send at a time when investigators are desperately trying to learn all they can about the anthrax attacks.

Rather's posturing aside, it might, after all, prove useful to epidemiologists and the FBI to know whether the letter that infected his assistant had also exposed him. Hard as it may be for anchors to accept, the story isn't always about them. ♦

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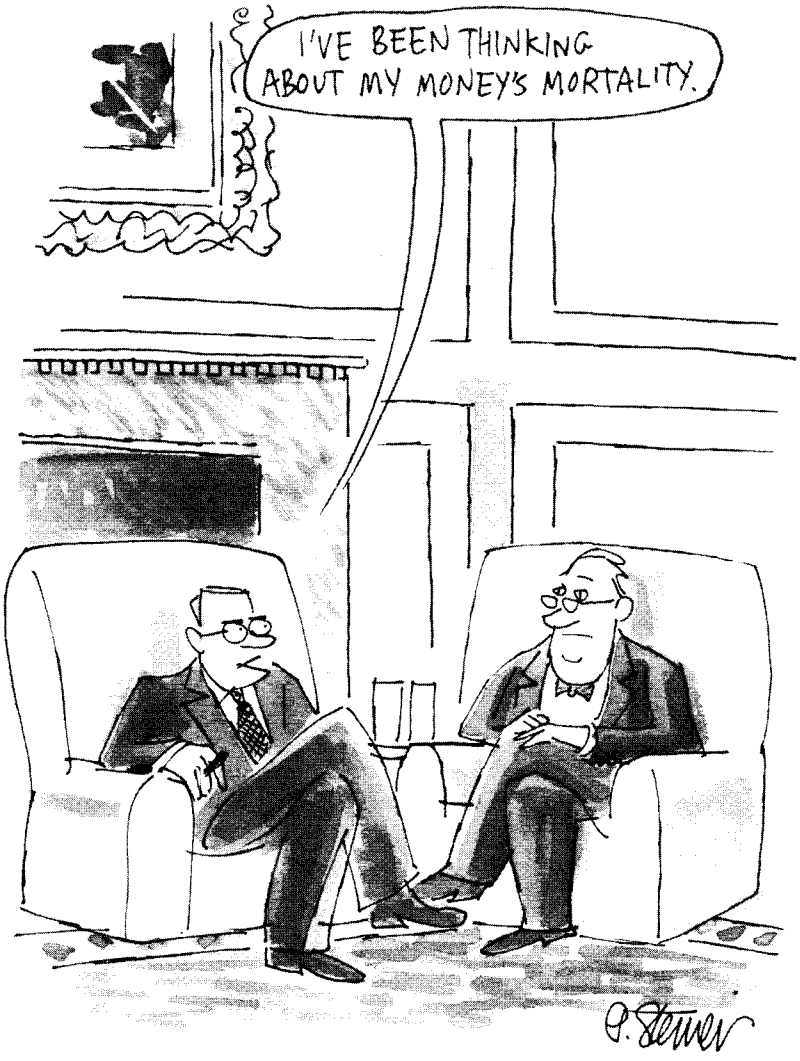

Machiavelli for Dummies

Joseph Biden, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has already taken plenty of flak for his warning that if the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan doesn't end "sooner rather than later" the United States risks appearing to be a "high-tech bully." But let's send more his way.

The "risk" of appearing a bully seems one well worth incurring. What September 11 should have taught us is that appearing to be a bully is better than most of the alternatives—appearing to be a wimp or a doormat or a high-tech coward, for instance.

Biden needs to reread his Machiavelli, but we realize he's a busy man, so we'll hereby inaugurate a semi-regular feature—THE SCRAPBOOK's condensation and annotation of the political classics for talking heads—with Chapter 17 of *The Prince*, which answers the question: Whether It Is Better to Be Loved Than Feared or the Opposite:

"I answer that a person [or, in this case, the U.S. government] would like to be the one and the other; but since it is difficult to mix them together, it is much safer to be feared than loved, if one of the two must be lacking. . . . Men [bin Laden, the Taliban, and more generally what our president calls "the evildoers"] are less concerned with hurting someone who makes himself loved than one who makes himself feared, because love is held by a link of obligation, which, since men are wretched creatures, is broken every time their own interests are involved; but fear is held by a dread of punishment [i.e., bombs and other deadly ordnance] which will never leave you." ♦

A Chattering Ass & a Surprisingly Good Guy

Mickey Kaus, editor, publisher, and CEO of *Kausfiles.com*, first drew our attention to *West Wing* creator Aaron Sorkin "for living up to his stereotype as a Hollywood-liberal fool."

Sorkin's unique contribution to an Occidental College forum on Hollywood's reaction to September 11 was to warn of incipient McCarthyism because his pal Bill Maher had lost sponsors for *Politically Incorrect* and been generally raked over the coals. This makes Sorkin the premier chattering ass of the week.

Said Sorkin: "In the fifties there was a blacklist, and it ruined lives. . . . Well, it's happening all over again. I think it's right now when it's most important that there be dissent. When the patriotism police should be kept at bay and that people understand that Bill Maher is every bit as much an American as you or I and let's remember the values that we are protecting in the first place."

Producer Sean Daniel—a Hollywood Democrat who hereby wins a place on our Surprisingly Good Guys List™—pricked Sorkin's balloon with this timely observation: "My father was blacklisted, and I know the era very well. But I have to tell you I don't think there's a party line out there." ♦

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Casual

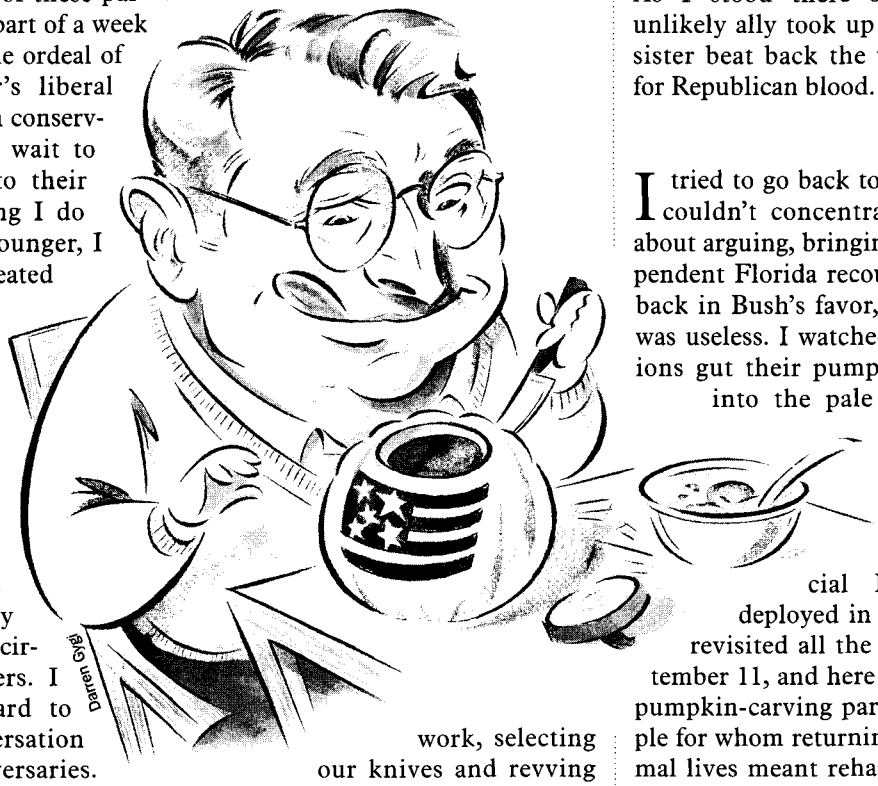
United We Carve

Last weekend I decided to follow the advice of our president and get back to normal life: I agreed to go to my sister's annual pumpkin-carving party. The fact that I was the reigning champion no doubt helped sway me, but so did the feeling in the air since September 11.

Usually, before one of these parties I spend the better part of a week preparing myself for the ordeal of relating to my sister's liberal friends. They know I'm conservative, and they lie in wait to grill me. Walking into their midst is not something I do lightly. When I was younger, I took pleasure in the heated debates we had as we sliced and scooped, but now I find such encounters induce only angst.

This year I was positive things would be different. I was confident the new sense of patriotism that is sweeping our country must have reached the circle of pumpkin carvers. I started looking forward to some pleasant conversation with my former adversaries. After all, America's new favorite catchphrase is "United We Stand." As my husband and I headed over to my sister's house in the happy commune of Falls Church City, little did we know I was a lamb to the slaughter.

We carried our pumpkins from the car, into a house decked with skeletons, ghosts, and spiders. Many of the normal crew were already there. I did my round of hellos. The faces, familiar from past gatherings, seemed less forbidding this year. We were beginning to be people who knew each other's histories. Some had gotten married, or had children, or landed new jobs. The first half hour came and went without incident. Life was good. We carvers started getting down to work, selecting our knives and revving up our competitive drives.



As I plotted my strategy, someone began passing around photos from last year. The pictures moved from person to person, and a newcomer to the group asked which pumpkin had won. I spoke up, the proud returning champion.

Now that I think about it, my victory last year really was rather amazing, considering the message I'd carved on my pumpkin. It had a simple design and said boldly: Vote Bush 2000. (Remember, I've admitted I used to enjoy needling these libs.) The new guy expressed shock that my pumpkin had won the blue ribbon, and things began to take a downward turn.

Someone said I had cheated last year because I'd used two pumpkins. The friendly girl with whom I'd just been comparing notes on hiking and camping turned on me, her face more and more resembling that of one of the demons displayed around the house. I was informed that the Republicans had stolen the election through voter fraud. My brother-in-law, who loves to throw oil on the fire, told me my pumpkin should have read "Adjudicate Bush 2000." As I stood there speechless, an unlikely ally took up my cause. My sister beat back the wolves thirsty for Republican blood.

I tried to go back to carving, but I couldn't concentrate. I thought about arguing, bringing up the independent Florida recounts that came back in Bush's favor, but I knew it was useless. I watched my companions gut their pumpkins and stab into the pale orange flesh, and I started to feel sick.

Then I thought about the Special Forces newly deployed in Afghanistan. I revisited all the scenes of September 11, and here I was at a silly pumpkin-carving party among people for whom returning to their normal lives meant rehashing Election 2000.

Miserable, I realized there was nothing for it but to escape. I made my excuses and got ready to leave. My husband—who tells me I take things too seriously—said he thought he'd stay and finish his pumpkin. Then I looked at his design and wished him luck, feeling a flash of gratitude. He was working on an intricate carving of the Stars and Stripes.

Tina Winston

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Great Minds of the Western Intellectual Tradition

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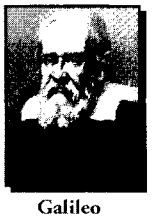
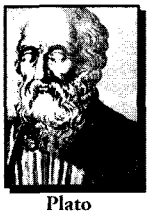

Galileo

Kant

Hegel

Bacon

Newton


Plato

Locke

Descartes

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

Ever since the dawn of civilization, certain crucial questions have preoccupied thoughtful people: What is the purpose of life? What is the best kind of life? Who or what is God? How can we tell truth from falsehood? What is the essence of justice? When is it legitimate for one person to have power over others? Can these questions even be answered?

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Defining the Enemy

I AGREE WITH MUCH of what Charles Krauthammer says about the nature of the combatants in the current war ("The Enemy Is Not Islam. It Is Nihilism." Oct. 22). The analogy between al Qaeda and the German Nazi party is particularly apt. Both use religions—in the case of the Nazis, Christianity—to shield themselves from criticism within the sphere of their presumed constituencies, while violating the foundations of those same religions. Both Hitler and bin Laden advocate cultural "returns" to their respective mythic *volkisch Gemeinschafts*, places immune to the "outside contaminations" of cultural, racial, and religious "others."

Bin Laden begins with his call for the removal of American influence from his own pan-Arab version of "one land, one blood, one folk." Analogy becomes congruence with his call for the removal of the Jews from his holy soil. Despite the fact that they are the sworn enemies of modernity, Nazism and radical Islamism pin their hopes for success on the use of avant-garde technology for wanton mass destruction. This last proclivity robs them of any pretense but nihilism.

Which brings me to Paul Hollander's "Anti-Americanism Revisited" (Oct 22). Katha Pollitt, Noam Chomsky, and the other "What's Left" intellectuals appear to have placed the psychological analyses of those who would like to kill them as a top priority in the war against terrorism. While this is an interesting subject, and particularly well-suited to the confines of the classroom, do they really believe that the lessening of resentment against the United States in Islamic countries will have the least effect on any of al Qaeda's plans? If so, these leftists might ponder bin Laden's decision to risk the lives of the Afghan masses rather than "martyr" himself and come out with his hands up.

DAVID MARC
Syracuse, NY

I BELIEVE CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER is the first in the American press to finally make a connection between the Bamian Buddhas and the twin towers. When I watched in horror as the two towers collapsed, I immediately thought of the Bamian Buddhas. In the comfort of our cocoon, we were for too long oblivious to the work of evil taking place right in front of us. The Bamian Buddhas were the miners' canaries. We failed to interpret their demise as a harbinger of disaster for all of us.

Are we still indulging in escapism, choosing to ignore the violent, anti-American mood of the Arab street? When American flags and effigies of the American president are burned by fervent mobs, do we still refuse to believe that the terrorists' true intent is to burn our cities?

I am grateful to Krauthammer for his clear analysis, and to THE WEEKLY STANDARD for publishing this warning.

EVA S. BELAVSKY
Chicago, IL

Flag-Waving American

NOEMIE EMERY CALLS my *New York Times Magazine* piece "Recapturing the Flag" an "attack on Old Glory as being somehow oppressive and sinister" ("Look Who's Waving the Flag Now," Oct. 15). The piece is exactly the opposite, as I'm sure Emery is aware.

Emery quotes passages in which I take a critical look at the mindset of liberalism from my youth and attributes them to the argument of the piece—a cheap and deceptive way to score a point. My argument, set down in the opening lines, is impossible for a fair-minded reader to mistake: "Sept. 11 made it safe for liberals to be patriots. Among the things destroyed with the twin towers was the notion, held by certain Americans ever since Vietnam, that to be stirred by national identity, carry a flag and feel grateful toward someone in uniform ought to be a source of embarrassment."

While THE WEEKLY STANDARD diligently monitors the stupidity of left-wing writing about the terrorist attacks, it ought to keep its other eye on the dishonesty practiced in its own pages.

GEORGE PACKER
Brooklyn, NY

In Bush We Trust?

WHEN WILL MEMBERS of the media end their praise of President George W. Bush for performing on par with, or (surprisingly) better than, their diminished expectations?

In response to Fred Barnes's "A Different Kind of War President" (Oct. 22), we can only be further dismayed and quickly counter Barnes: George W. Bush is NOT an effective communicator. For example, Barnes notes "repetition" as one of Bush's skills, but I watched the same address and question-and-answer session. Bush's repetition conveyed not a message, but a lack of rhetorical skills and limited intelligence.

George W. Bush's inability to hold or convey a more complex understanding of U.S. domestic or foreign policy and events embarrasses both the presidency and the United States as a whole.

ERIK GILLESPIE
Brooklyn, NY

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the weekly Standard

To Tell the Truth

Nine months have now gone by, and we, like most Americans, find much to praise in the conduct of George W. Bush's presidency—especially his recent assumption of wartime leadership.

But we are a bit concerned by one aspect of the administration's performance these past couple of weeks: In the much-noted fumblings of its recent public statements on terrorism, the Bush executive branch has exhibited a pronounced weakness for spin.

Consider the Defense Department's shifting answers to those moronic "have we won yet?" questions the Pentagon press corps seems unable to resist asking. Two weeks ago, worried, apparently, that the country expected instant success in Afghanistan, DoD spokesmen were full of talk about how an infant American air campaign had already "eviscerated" the Taliban. Wednesday last week, worried, apparently, that they had thus raised expectations a mite too high, Pentagon briefers made haste to caution that certain Talibanic viscera remained very much in place. "I am a bit surprised at how doggedly they're hanging onto power," Rear Admiral John Stufflebeem remarked. It's "a very difficult situation," rather like "looking for a needle in a haystack," said secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld. "I just don't know whether we'll be successful."

What the administration needs to grasp is that telling the truth need not be a threatening, scary business—especially now, in a time of crisis.

And the very next day, worried, apparently, that such a downbeat assessment might weaken public support for the war, Rumsfeld walked back his words higgledy-piggledy, as if it were the most natural thing on Earth to do: We "fully intend to find [the al Qaeda leadership] and chase them to ground and root them out and stop them from doing what they're doing."

Got that?

At least the Pentagon's missteps have involved only relatively trivial responses of the "what grade I would give myself" variety. On the homefront, by contrast, administration officials have repeatedly made spin-driven errors of basic fact about the most urgent public health issues imaginable. Early on, obviously on guard lest the natives grow panicky, Health and Human Services secretary Tommy Thompson coolly—and irresponsibly—speculated that Florida tabloid photo editor Robert Stevens might have innocently contracted a fatal case of anthrax by drinking contaminated water from the stream where he fished.

Long after it was clear that postal terrorism was involved—and trace amounts of anthracis bacilli had been located at an off-site White House mail facility—the administration still seemed to think that preventing public hysteria, evidence for which was virtually nonexistent, was more important than communicating essential information. Four times at a photo op last Tuesday, reporters directly asked the president whether he himself had thought it necessary to be tested for exposure to anthrax. Four times last Tuesday he refused to say.

The next day, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer announced that "people should feel safe opening their mail." U.S. Postmaster General John Potter had already publicly acknowledged "I can't offer a guarantee" any such thing is true.

The White House worries about appearing competent and in control. So homeland security czar Tom Ridge talks like a county councilman up for reelection: "The response at all levels of government was immediate and comprehensive." And the "scope and strength of our country's bio-defense network" has been impressive. And Ridge talks to the president "two or three or four times a day." And the anti-anthrax work of the various government agencies he's charged with coordinating has so far been characterized by "extraordinary collaboration."

This last claim is a stretch, as innumerable senior administration officials have lately admitted on background. But Ari Fleischer has angrily repudiated his more candid colleagues. You can't trust unnamed sources, he contends. "If they thought they were right, they'd put their name on it." Does Fleischer imagine they think they're *wrong*?

And so on.

The Bushies do not lie and hide the way their predecessors habitually did. What the Clinton administration failed to understand was that truthfulness and transparency in

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government aren't simply inconvenient virtues, but positive constitutional obligations. We have a solitary chief executive, Hamilton famously explained in *Federalist* 70, because the office demands deliberate, directed "energy" that would be impossible were presidential authority divided among several men. And for this energy to remain secure, Hamilton went on, citizens must have confidence that it is being exercised wisely. Which is another advantage of having a single president: He's easier to keep tabs on. So precisely in order to fulfill his necessary leadership responsibilities, the president is required to subject himself to full and constant public inspection.

George W. Bush and his appointees do, on balance, seem to understand this duty. What they occasionally fail to grasp, however, is that telling the truth need not be a threatening, scary business—especially now, in a time of crisis. Americans are not a nation of children. And our leaders need not turn themselves endlessly upside down, manipulating the news about the terror attacks now being waged against us. The country can handle its facts undiluted, thank you very much, and would surely prefer them that way. This magazine would be reassured to hear, for example, that the president *has* been tested for anthrax. It would be mighty inconvenient for him to be stricken with a fatal illness just now.

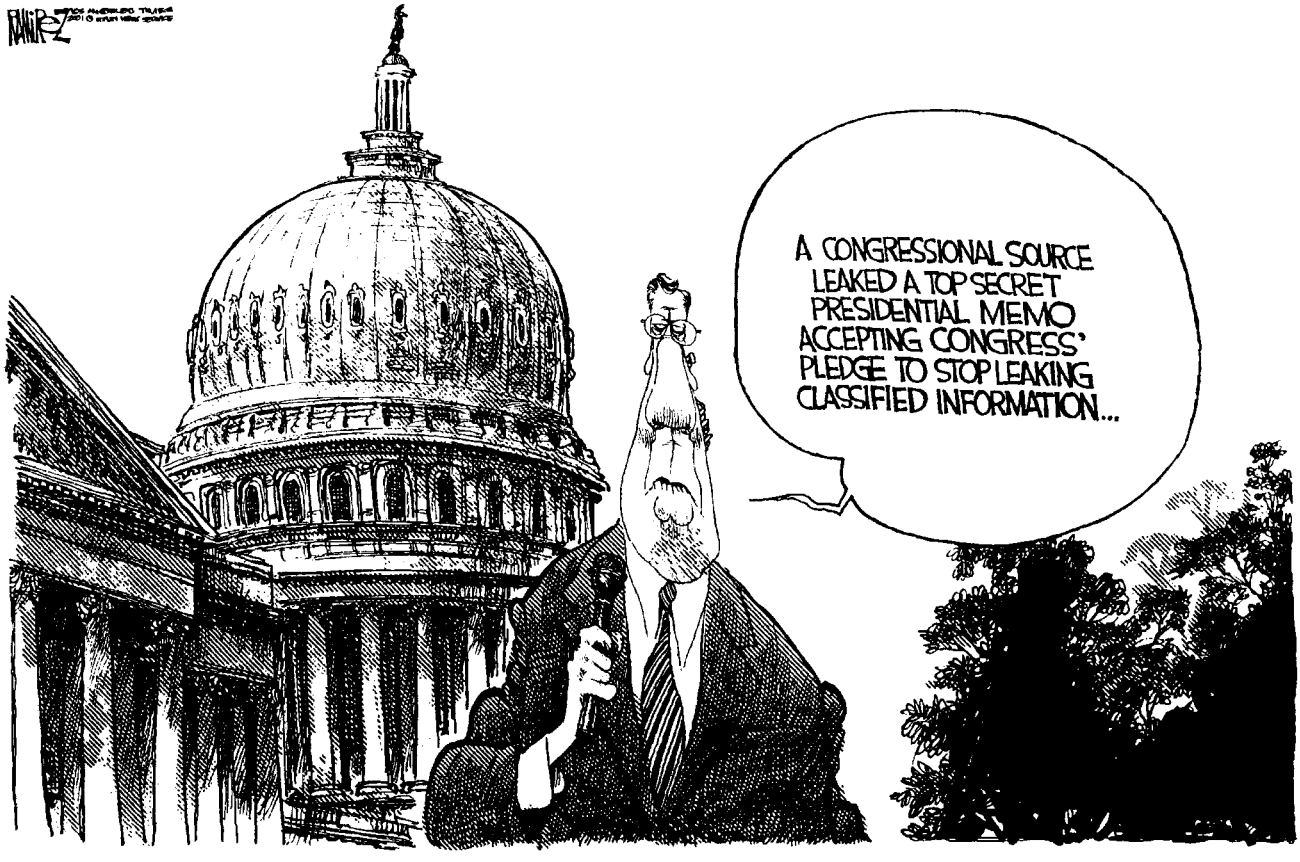
Moreover, it's our sense that the administration enjoys a much wider and deeper reservoir of public support than it seems to imagine. The country does not expect global terrorism to be eradicated in a month. It does not expect the government immediately and perfectly to understand and respond to a wave of bio-warfare attacks for which there is no precedent. The mood is plain: We are all in this together. So we will tolerate the long haul. And we will tolerate temporary, partial gaps in official expertise and preparedness. And we will even tolerate error.

So long as the government appears to be working round the clock, doing its best, and making constant, perceptible progress. And so long as the government plays the whole thing straight.

For the duration of the current anthrax outbreak, we would recommend that the White House send out only its most professionally knowledgeable staffers to meet the press, with directions to answer every question as completely and accurately as they are able, freely admit ignorance whenever necessary, and fully explain whatever other reasons there might be why certain questions can't be answered. Any administration official who can't perform this task should be told to keep his mouth shut.

That shouldn't be so hard, should it?

—David Tell, for the Edi0tors



Michael Ramirez

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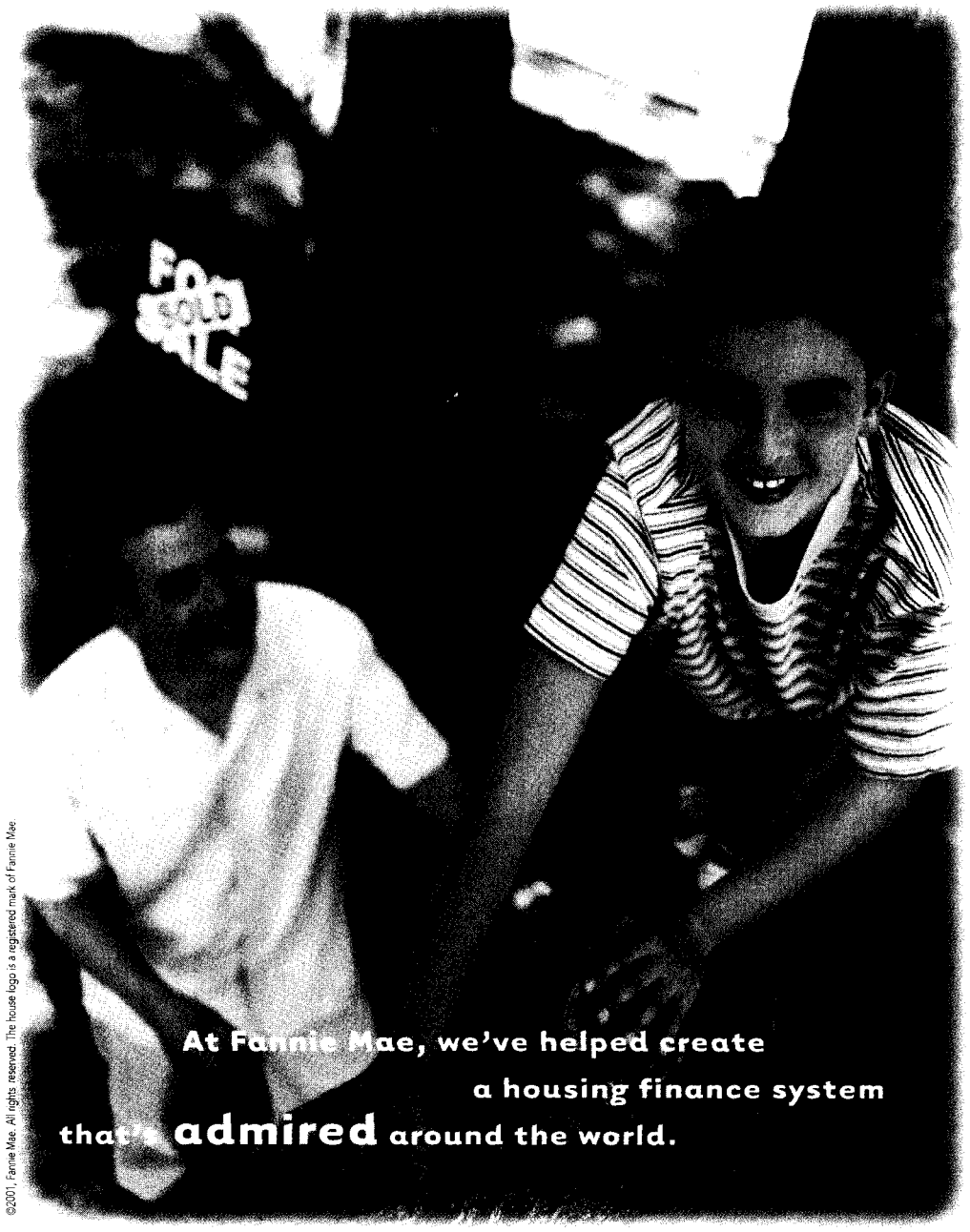

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Bush Only Needs to Do One Thing

Win the war. BY FRED BARNES

PRESIDENT BUSH is doing his duty to keep spirits up. "The terrorists wanted our economy to stop," he said at a printing company in Glen Burnie, Maryland. "It hasn't. They wanted to diminish the spirit of America. It didn't." At a White House photo op, he assured reporters that the effort to spread anthrax "won't succeed. This country is too strong to allow terrorists to affect the lives of our citizens." He told kids at a Washington elementary school the one goal in fighting terrorism is "to make sure you can live in freedom in a great land." And last Friday at an East Room signing ceremony for his anti-terrorism bill, he said law enforcement will now have more tools "to identify, to dismantle, to disrupt, and to punish terrorists before they strike." In short, the president is determined not to lose the war at home.

But the domestic front isn't Bush's biggest problem. The war in Afghanistan is. Wartime presidencies don't collapse because of shortcomings or unrest at home. Bush's father, George H.W. Bush, got a pass from the public on the declining economy during the Gulf War. He suffered *after* the war when he still didn't have an answer for the recession. When the country is at war, presidents are held accountable for only one thing: winning the war. If the military campaign goes poorly or there's a stalemate, which is just as bad from a public opinion standpoint, presidents suffer. Truman's reelection in 1952 was short-circuited by the Korean War. Johnson's was undone by Vietnam. And in 1864, Lincoln's reelection prospects also looked bleak—until the Civil War turned decisively in the Union's favor.

Media criticism notwithstanding, Bush is doing fine domestically. True, his underlings stumbled initially in confronting anthrax. Tommy Thompson, the secretary of health and human services, foolishly minimized the anthrax threat. And Tom Ridge, the new homeland security chief, couldn't respond adequately to reporters' questions. But Ridge quickly got up to speed, and now his almost daily briefings are crisp, informed, and unusually candid. If they weren't, the press would fault the Bush administration on style points, but that wouldn't do much harm. The simple fact is: Bush won't be blamed for the anthrax scare. It's widely understood as an unpredictable phenomenon he couldn't control. There's anxiety, of course, but no hysteria. People aren't fleeing Washington or New York.

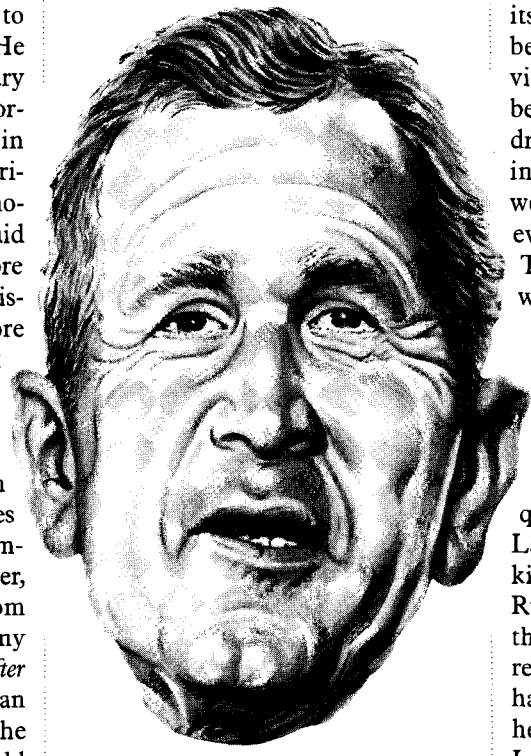

Illustration by Drew Friedman

If only the war itself—the shooting war—were going as well. The press has given the White House high marks for its marketing of the war. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld is praised as a strong briefer (though he discloses few facts). Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell get credit for amassing an international coalition against terrorism. Condoleezza Rice, the national security adviser, was impressive in persuading the TV networks to keep terrorist propaganda from Osama bin Laden off the air. All this is ephemera, however, when compared with the war itself. The public's expectations may be too high following the 100-hour victory in the Gulf War. People may be impatient. Nonetheless, if the war drags on, the public will be unforgiving. They want bin Laden, his network, and the Taliban—indeed, everyone responsible for the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks—waxed now.

That seems unlikely at the moment. The Pentagon has become a fountain of discouraging words. Ari Fleischer, the White House press secretary, vehemently disputed a *USA Today* headline that quoted Rumsfeld as saying bin Laden may never be captured or killed. At his daily briefing, he cited Rumsfeld's actual comments—and the point was lost. Any reasonable reading of what the defense secretary had said backed up the *USA Today* headline. Meanwhile, Rear Admiral John Stufflebeem, the deputy director of operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Taliban is a tougher foe than anticipated. And British Admiral Michael Boyce said commando raids into Afghanistan to find bin Laden may take far longer than planned. Nor was the assessment of the war last week by Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, terribly upbeat. "Success is yet to be determined, but we think we're having some success," he said.

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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Echoing the brass, the mood of Washington turned negative last week for the first time. But still there's been no serious second-guessing—at the White House or elsewhere in the administration and practically none on Capitol Hill. Joe Biden, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said a prolonged air war might anger Muslims, and his tepid dissent prompted criticism from House speaker Dennis Hastert. But Biden didn't question the American strategy in the war on the right grounds. Muslims will grouse no matter what the United States does. The problem is that overwhelming force, championed by Colin Powell in the Gulf War, is not being applied in Afghanistan. Or anything like overwhelming force. Instead, the strategy from the Balkans has been adopted: bomb, bomb, bomb, but never massively and never in carpet-bombing fashion. And there's not much of a ground forces component either. Call it underwhelming force. Yes, there are reasons for it. Allies in the coalition who don't feel threatened by bin Laden or the Taliban fear excessive American force will rile the masses. Pakistan doesn't want the Northern Alliance to end up controlling much ground, as it might with a quick American triumph. The U.S. military likes a war with few American casualties and no quagmire. And so on.

Where does this leave Bush? He's a commanding presence in Washington. His astronomical poll ratings, post-September 11, haven't dipped a bit. He gained almost everything he wanted in the anti-terrorist bill, and there's a better-than-even chance he'll get an aviation security bill and an economic stimulus package that are mostly to his liking. When Karl Rove, the White House political adviser, surveys the political landscape, he's bound to smile about Bush's chances in 2004. And why not? If war in Afghanistan is won in a few months and, as is likely, the economy turns up, the president's future will be all but secure. But if the war effort slips and slides for a year or two or more, then all bets are off. ♦

Our Most Surprising Ally

Meet Joschka Fischer, Green hawk.

BY JEFFREY GEDMIN

CONSIDER two foreign ministers. The first wants "to destroy" the Taliban; the second to work with "moderate Taliban leaders." The first warns repeatedly that a key terrorist aim is "the destruction of Israel." The second seeks, even now after the assassination of a government minister, to increase pressure on the Jewish state. The first defends American sovereignty and U.S. leadership: Missile defense, he says, is "a purely national decision of the U.S."; regarding NATO, he argues that to "enforce peace in Europe," it is necessary for "the United States to take the lead." The second worries about losing the coalition if the president makes Iraq the next target. If "the coalition felt it was necessary to go after terrorist groups in other countries, this would be a matter for the coalition to discuss," reports the second minister's deputy.

The second voice is that of U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell; the hawkish first voice, that of Germany's foreign minister, Joschka Fischer, leader of his country's left-wing Green party. It's an odd state of affairs when the U.S. secretary of state in a Republican administration starts sounding more European than the Europeans themselves, especially when compared with Fischer.

Of course, the Europeans adore Colin Powell. He counts as the reasonable moderate of the Bush administration—a lover of coalitions, with strong allergies to the use of force. The secretary of state generally seems to get full credit, moreover, for the comprehensive strategy that has emerged in the weeks since September 11. As one German columnist says of our war-mongering president, if George W. Bush had his way, diplomat "Powell would be unemployed."

It is tempting, of course, to see this as a transatlantic match made in multilateral heaven. But the European position is one of ambivalence. Sure, the allies like the big hug of coalition building. It brings them into the fold and increases their leverage vis-à-vis the United States. And the Europeans celebrate Powell for his constant pursuit of a stable coalition, treating him like a savior for doing battle with the antichrists at the Pentagon.

But Europeans also understand that in the war against terrorism anything that diminishes American strength and freedom for maneuver may run counter to their own interests. On the subject of preemptive strikes down the road, for example, says one senior German military official privately: "The U.S. should just do it—and tell us about it afterward." This same ambivalence toward American power thwarted Warren Christopher's 1993 Europe trip. When given the opportunity, the allies were happy to reject Bill Clinton's plans for a more muscular approach to Bosnia; so the war raged on, and Europeans were shocked by the lack of American confidence and resolve.

Which means if President Bush is true to his word that the United States will make no distinction between the terrorists and the states who assist them, and Iraq's number will be called sooner or later. When

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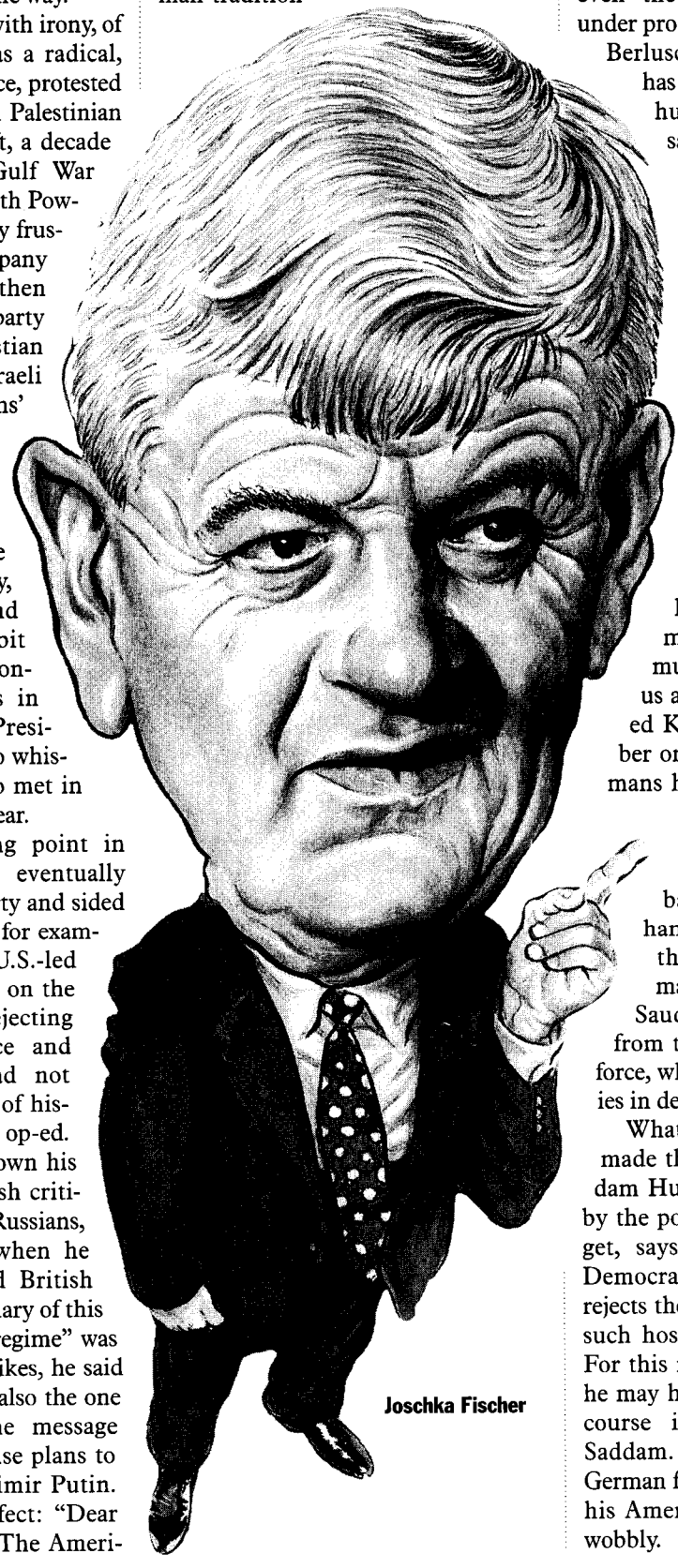
this day comes, Joschka Fischer could help stiffen the spine of Europeans and even help get the Russians on board—or at least out of the way.

Such a scenario oozes with irony, of course. In earlier days as a radical, Fischer clashed with police, protested Vietnam, and flirted with Palestinian extremism. From the left, a decade ago, he opposed the Gulf War (which put him in line with Powell), though he was clearly frustrated by some of the company he was keeping. It was then that Fischer ripped into party chairman Hans-Christian Ströbele for anti-Israeli remarks, calling the Greens' leader a "beadle of Saddam Hussein." And then Fischer turned hawk. He discovered the goodness of America, the utility of force, and, slowly, the marriage of values and interests. It may be a bit much to call him a neoconservative—but he tends in this direction, as Vice President Cheney was heard to whisper to him when the two met in Washington earlier this year.

Bosnia was a turning point in Fischer's thinking. He eventually stood against his own party and sided with Margaret Thatcher, for example, in supporting a U.S.-led intervention. Powell was on the other side, angrily rejecting Lady Thatcher's advice and chiding those who had not understood the "lessons of history" in a *New York Times* op-ed.

Fischer again faced down his own party—and the harsh criticism of the French, the Russians, and the Arab world—when he supported the U.S. and British bombing of Iraq in February of this year. Saddam's "bloody regime" was responsible for the airstrikes, he said at the time. Fischer was also the one who first delivered the message about U.S. missile defense plans to Russian president Vladimir Putin. The message was in effect: "Dear Vlad, save your breath. The Americans are going ahead," according to American and German sources. No *Schaukelpolitik* here—that great German tradition of playing West against East.



Joschka Fischer

Illustration by Drew Friedman

As calls for a bombing pause in Afghanistan have increased—with even the Italian foreign minister under pro-Bush prime minister Silvio Berlusconi chiming in—Fischer has not moved one inch. To the humanitarian Left, Fischer says only the end of Taliban rule will ultimately help the people of Afghanistan. As for his own dovish and potentially mischievous foreign ministry, he keeps reminding them, to their dismay, that what the Americans are conducting is, after all, a war.

There's no reason to get carried away. Fischer can get as prickly as the next guy in Brussels about unrestrained American hegemony, and he remains, like all Germans, a devout multilateralist. But there is much work that he could help us accomplish. While the United Kingdom is America's number one ally in this war, the Germans have more influence on the continent, especially with the French and Russians. Germany also has military bases that could come in handy. During the Gulf War, the United States used Germany to deploy to Turkey and Saudi Arabia and commanded from the Federal Republic a task force, which included Patriot batteries in defense of Tel Aviv and Haifa.

What if the United States really made the case for going after Saddam Hussein? "Don't be surprised by the positive response" you might get, says a senior German Social Democrat. Fischer in particular rejects the moral relativism that finds such hospitable lodging in Europe. For this reason, at crucial moments, he may have the bearings to stay the course if the war turns toward Saddam. Maybe it will then be the German foreign minister's turn to tell his American counterpart not to go wobbly. ♦

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Wahhabis in America

A Saudi export we could do without.

BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

SECRETARY OF STATE Colin Powell thinks "it's a little odd" for the United States to be telling our Saudi allies that they should "muzzle dissent, . . . muzzle those [in Saudi Arabia] who are speaking out against us" and our campaign in Afghanistan.

But the main public critics of the United States in Saudi Arabia are no ordinary "dissenters." They are the Islamofascist imams and muftis of the Wahhabi sect, the ideological arm of the Saudi royal dictatorship. Secretary Powell's solicitousness for the rights of these extremists seems to be based on two unfortunate misconceptions. One is that the Saudi regime is, and should be, part of an alliance with the United States. The other combines a misplaced belief that American standards of free speech should extend to those who plot our destruction, with obliviousness to the global reach of the Wahhabi-Saudi network.

As Powell should be aware, the Wahhabi-Saudi establishment subsidizes terrorism while seeking to control Muslim religious institutions and activities around the world. Saudi influence reaches even the overwhelming majority of mosques in the United States. The issue, therefore, is not muzzling the Wahhabis, but removing the muzzle from their victims, over whom they exercise an abusive control.

There are many critics of Wahhabism-Saudism among American Muslims, but few who are willing to speak out by name for the record. Most have been intimidated into silence. In addition, among the enemies of the Wahhabi-Saudi conspiracy, some of the angriest, most knowledgeable, and most forthcoming with information are not pro-American; they are angry at Riyadh for its compromises with the West. Yet their rage at Saudi duplicity leads them to publicize damaging and verifiable information about Saudi mischief.

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani of the Islamic Supreme Council of America is one critic of Wahhabism who falls into neither of these problematic categories. He is an eloquent public opponent of Wahhabi efforts to regiment American Muslims; and he fully supports American democratic values, as well as a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Arab conflict. In 1999, Kabbani warned that 80 percent of mosques in the United States are subject to Wahhabi manipulation, through financial subsidies. More recently he wrote of the spreading influence of Wahhabis, who often go by the cover name "Salafis": "Supported by certain regimes pursuing specific ideologies, 'Salafis' are taking over the mosques built in Europe and North America, mostly by Indian and Pakistani immigrants, by means of elections and funding."

But Wahhabi domination involves much more than control over money and the elected governing assemblies of mosques; it also means dictating the curriculum for the training of imams, setting the tone and content of sermons, deciding what books and periodicals may be read in mosque libraries or sold in mosque bookshops, and excluding or otherwise suppressing dissenters.

Wahhabism is based on the justification and promotion of violence against all, including Muslims, who do not share the Wahhabi outlook. Kabbani has called this its "most harmful legacy to society." Pious youths from Muslim countries, sent to be educated in the Gulf states, are brainwashed. On returning to their homes, they brusquely reject the traditional Islam of their parents. Further, they are taught to abstain from all participation in society outside Wahhabi mosques and organizations. For American Muslims this means, Kabbani notes, that they must not vote, serve on juries, or join in interfaith activities. Such strictures prevented the numerous imams and activists associated with Wahhabi mosques in the United States from joining forces with Jews, Christians, and others in behalf of the Muslim victims of the Balkan wars.

The Wahhabi worldwide offensive does not end with such manipulations. Rather, it comprises, in Kabbani's words, "heavy financing, deviant teaching, Internet and book publishing, and biased editing." The Wahhabis are particularly known for the free distribution and dumping on the book market of their literature,

Stephen Schwartz is writing a book to be titled The Two Faces of Islam.

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including tendentious translations of the Koran, the Islamic scripture. Such materials have included the writings of a Wahhabi bigot, Hamd ibn 'Abd al-Muhsin, who demanded that women who drive automobiles in Saudi Arabia be charged as prostitutes.

Dr. Gibril Fuad Haddad, a Lebanese writer and opponent of Wahhabism-Saudism, has placed nearly the whole Islamic establishment in America and other Western countries on the roster of Saudi-subsidized propagandists. This includes the functionaries who stood alongside President Bush at the Washington Islamic Center soon after September 11. Haddad's condemnation encompasses the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) and the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), which exercise immense influence over mosques, the World Assembly of Muslim Youth, and numerous other incarnations of this hydra-headed beast. According to one informant who requested anonymity, Wahhabi imams in American mosques until recently received salaries of between $2,000 and $4,000 a month from the Gulf states.

Indeed, the multifarious Wahhabi entities spend money like, well, a Saudi oil prince—some of it on political lobbying. In 1999, the Saudi embassy in Washington announced a grant by the Islamic Development Bank of $250,000 to the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) for the purchase of land in Washington, to be used in the construction of "an education and research center." CAIR is, without doubt, the most obnoxious front for terrorist apologetics to be found in the United States; even since September 11, it has relentlessly sought, on the pretext of promoting "sensitivity," to dictate how Islam may be discussed in American media. Its methods are anything but subtle, usually featuring peremptory demands and even threats, and until recently it was notably successful. (CAIR, incidentally, is but a minor line item in the Wahhabi budget. The Saudi embassy statement announcing the grant to CAIR also reported gifts of $395,000 for the construction of a school in Tanzania and $30 million for "Islamic associations in India.")

Wahhabi-Saudi lobbying is nothing if not bold. In 1999, Saudi "relief agencies" were on the scene in Kosovo within a month of the end of the NATO intervention, showering money for Wahhabi indoctrination. The Saudi embassy in Washington proudly declared, on that occasion, that a goal of the effort was "promoting Islamic curricula as a mandatory component in Kosovo schools." But while Kosovar Albanians are Muslims in their majority, they include a significant Catholic minority, especially prominent in intellectual life.

It was no wonder, then, that on December 29, 1999, the Kosovapress news agency, media arm of the former Kosovo Liberation Army, issued a strong denunciation of the infiltration of Wahhabi-Saudi missionaries. It declared, "For more than a century, civilized countries have separated religion from the state. . . . We now see attempts, not only in Kosovo but everywhere Albanians live, to introduce religion into public schools. . . . Supplemental courses for children have been set up by foreign Islamic organizations who hide behind assistance programs. Some radio stations . . . now offer nightly broadcasts in Arabic, which nobody understands and which lead many to ask, are we in an Arab country? It is time for Albanian mosques to be separated from Arab connections and for Islam to be developed on the basis of Albanian culture and customs."

The multifarious Wahhabi entities spend money like, well, a Saudi oil prince—some of it on political lobbying.

The Saudis also use their control over the city of Mecca—destination of the *hajj* pilgrimage that is one of the five pillars of Islam, obligatory for all who can afford it—as an opportunity for political shenanigans. In their hands, the *hajj* frequently becomes a paid junket useful for recruitment purposes. In 2000, the Muslim World League (much overdue for a full investigation into its funding of Osama bin Laden, but omitted from the president's list of groups whose funds have been frozen) hosted 100 prominent American Islamic personalities on *hajj*. They were accompanied by a delegation of 60 Latin American "academics and specialists." All expenses for the latter were paid by Prince Bandar Ibn Sultan Ibn Abdul Aziz, Saudi ambassador to the United States. Last year the Saudis advertised their subsidy of 1,500 pilgrims from Europe, Asia, Africa, and North America. In 1999, the Saudis paid for 100 influential American Muslims to "make *hajj*." The list of such expenditures seems limitless.

Resentment of this religious colonialism is rife among American Muslims, however subdued its expression now. One authoritative source who also asked to remain nameless but who was long courted by the Islamic Society of North America told me, "American Muslims are getting real sick of Wahhabi domination." Others, however, note that ISNA has recently feigned openness to non-Wahhabi Muslims, just as its leaders portrayed themselves as "anti-terrorist" to President Bush.

For Wahhabis everywhere, the party line is laid down in Riyadh, which simultaneously foments terrorist teaching and disclaims any responsibility for Wahhabi atrocities, exemplified by those of bin Laden. Saudis corrupt Muslims abroad in exactly the way that the Soviet Union once bought the loyalty of foreign intellectuals, labor leaders, and guerrilla fighters, and for the same ends. This worldwide subversion can be combated only as fascist and Communist sedition were once fought: with courage and determination, and in full solidarity with the Muslim heroes in the forefront of resistance to it. ♦

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Wishful Thinking in Our Time

Who really thinks a homegrown psycho is responsible for anthrax? BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

AFTER ATTENDING a briefing held by CIA director George Tenet and FBI director Robert Mueller last Thursday, Florida Democrat Bob Graham emerged from the Capitol to let the American people know where we stand in the search for those who mailed the treated anthrax that has thus far resulted in three deaths, dozens of infections, and 10,000 prophylactic doses of the antibiotic Cipro. The identity of the culprit, said Graham, is "really up in the air."

But the theories of the crime are not. There are basically two schools of thought. First are those who hold that the anthrax was obtained or manufactured by al Qaeda or a sympathetic terrorist network. The *New York Times* coverage has leaned towards this view. Second are those who see the hand of "homegrown extremists." The *Washington Post* gave full airing last week to that view. Both sides have "expert" sources to back their mutually contradictory points.

The question has grown more pressing the more the packet sent to Senate majority leader Tom Daschle has been analyzed. For the anthrax seems to have been refined and milled to make it easy to inhale, and then coated to make it more efficiently deadly, using a technique that only the United States, the former Soviet Union, and Iraq are thought to have mastered. And we destroyed our anthrax stocks a quarter century ago.

In a narrow sense, the foreign-versus-homegrown question is meaningless. Of *course* this wave of terror is homegrown. The letters we know of were mailed from Trenton, New Jersey. The real question is whether it was done by an old-fashioned Tim McVeigh-style, angry white sociopath, or whether it was done by a Muslim with an anti-American political agenda. This is a question of overriding importance. If a McVeigh-type is to blame, then we're embarking on one of the largest American criminal investigations ever. It will be scary and more Americans may die by the time it's over, but we've been there before. It's the territory of clock-tower snipers and disgruntled-employee shootings writ large.

If it's an al Qaeda or other Islamofascist effort, we're in different territory altogether. For one thing, until that movement's logistical support around the country is finally rolled up, we will have to anticipate worse attacks. If al Qaeda or some allied group retains enough spores, we could face widespread simultaneous releases of anthrax that would endanger the lives of millions. Or it could turn out that anthrax is just the first installment of varied bio-terror attacks to come. Most consequential of all, any link to Iraq's biological weapons program would entail, at the least, a second Gulf War. And remember that it has been U.S. policy since the first Gulf War that a biological attack would, militarily speaking, put "all options on the table." Which scenario do you prefer? Coaxing some nut off a clock-tower with a bullhorn? Or eyeball-to-eyeball threats of nuclear escalation?

Given the alternative, it is perfectly understandable why people would want to cling to the clock-tower scenario. But it's getting more and more difficult to do so. Typical of the evidence for a "homegrown" crank was the *Washington Post*'s interview with a retired Air Force official named Gerald "Gary" Brown. Brown thinks the high-quality anthrax Daschle received was sent by a right-wing kook because Daschle's "on the left." This is naive sociology, to say the least.

The evidence for some link to the Islamicist terror agenda, meanwhile, grows stronger as the days pass. The *New York Times*'s Judith Miller, author of a book on germ warfare, spoke to a scientist who said that the Daschle anthrax particles were surrounded by a "tiny brown ring," consistent with the use of bentonite, an agent used to weaponize anthrax in the Iraqi biological arms program.

It is not the quality of the evidence but the hugeness of the stakes that is driving investigators towards the "homegrown" reading of the crisis. Just look at last week's parade of wishful thinkers. There was Tom Ridge's urging that people "wash their hands" after opening mail. (Since soap doesn't kill anthrax, one could reasonably ask: With *what*? Formaldehyde?) There were all the handwriting "experts" theorizing that the anthrax letters were produced by some American trying to imitate a Muslim extremist. (But have you looked closely at the *R*s? How can they be the work of a native user of Latin handwriting?) And then there was Deputy Postmaster General John Nolan's assertion last Wednesday that "any risk that may exist [from mailed anthrax] is infinitesimal." (Provided, that is, that the terrorists are polite enough not to mail any more letters.)

The evidence for al Qaeda's or Iraq's involvement is not conclusive. If it proves so, the implications are grim. The "homegrown extremist" argument, alas, looks like nothing more than our latest effort to fantasize our way back to the peace of mind we enjoyed two months ago. ♦

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The Age of Conflict

Politics and culture after September 11

By David Brooks

"A singular fact of modern war," the historian Bruce Catton once wrote, "is that it takes charge. Once begun it has to be carried to its conclusion, and carrying it there sets in motion events that may be beyond men's control. Doing what has to be done to win, men perform acts that alter the very soil in which society's roots are nourished." Catton was writing about the Civil War, but his observation applies to most wars, and it will likely apply to the war to which we are now committed. If this conflict lasts as long as it is likely to last—as long as the president has warned us it will—it will reshape our culture and our politics. It will constitute a hinge moment in American history.

We had probably entered a time of transition even before the September 11 attack. The collapse of the dot-com economy already meant that Silicon Valley and the wonders of high technology were not going to hold the nation's attention during the next ten years the way they did during the last ten. The economic slowdown had already brought one boom to an end; the next economic recovery was bound to have different growth sectors, a different personality. George W. Bush's Washington was bound to be different from Bill Clinton's.

But September 11 brought the 1990s to a close all at once. And the ensuing war will mean that the next few years will not only feel different from the last few; they will feel dramatically different. Subjects that used to seem riveting will seem stale. Can anybody imagine why we cared about *Inside.com*? Can anybody remember what was so buzz-worthy about Tina Brown? Can anybody relive the excitement that greeted the release of Windows 95? Can anybody get interested in think tank reports on Social Security lockboxes or charitable choice? Are there liberals still intrigued by the disease of "affluenza" or the menace of corporate branding? For that matter, can anyone read Maureen Dowd without wincing? She was the quintessential columnist of the 1990s, brilliantly treating politics as a sitcom. But she has been struggling to adapt to an era in which politics really matters.

Subjects that used to seem riveting now seem stale. Can anyone read Maureen Dowd—the quintessential columnist of the 1990s—without wincing?

"What changes after a hinge is our stories of ourselves," Joel Garreau wrote recently in the *Washington Post*, "Who we are, how we got that way, where we're headed and what makes us tick." Garreau interviewed psychologists who study "figure/ground" reversal. That's what you get when you stare at one of those drawings of two heads facing each other in profile; first you see a black face staring left, then suddenly your perception changes and you see a white face staring right. "What had been central suddenly has become peripheral. What had been ignorable has suddenly become central," Garreau writes.

Obviously nobody knows what the future years will feel like, but we do know that the next decade will have a central feature that was lacking in the last one: The next few years will be defined by conflict. And it's possible to speculate about what that means. The institutions that fight for us and defend us against disorder—the military, the FBI, the CIA—will seem more important and more admirable. The fundamental arguments won't be over economic or social issues, they will be over how to wield pow-

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er—whether to use American power aggressively or circumspectly. We will care a lot more about ends—winning the war—than we will about means. We will debate whether it is necessary to torture prisoners who have information about future biological attacks. We will destroy innocent villages by accident, shrug our shoulders, and continue fighting. In an age of conflict, bourgeois virtues like compassion, tolerance, and industriousness are valued less than the classical virtues of courage, steadfastness, and a ruthless desire for victory.

Looking back, the striking thing about the 1990s zeitgeist was the presumption of harmony. The era was shaped by the idea that there were no fundamental conflicts anymore. The Cold War was over, and while the ensuing wars—like those in Bosnia and Rwanda —were nettlesome, they were restricted to global backwaters. Meanwhile, technology was building bridges across cultures. The Internet, Microsoft ads reminded us, fostered communication and global harmony. All around the world there were people casting off old systems so they could embrace a future of peace and prosperity. Chinese Communists were supposedly being domesticated by the balm of capitalist success. Peace seemed in the offing in Northern Ireland and, thanks to the Oslo process, in the Middle East.

Now that violence has come calling, private life requires public protection. It is not possible to ignore foreign affairs, because foreign affairs have not ignored us.

Bill Clinton and George W. Bush were elected president of the United States. Neither had performed much in the way of military service. Neither was particularly knowledgeable about foreign affairs. Both promised to be domestic-policy presidents. In that age of peace and prosperity, the top sitcom was *Seinfeld*, a show about nothing. Books appeared with titles like *All Connected Now: Life in the First Global Civilization*. Academics analyzed the twilight of national sovereignty. Commerce and communications seemed much more important than politics.

Defense spending was drastically cut, by Republicans as well as Democrats, because there didn't seem to be any clear and present danger to justify huge budgets. The army tried to recruit volunteers by emphasizing its educational benefits, with narcissistic slogans like "An Army of One." Conservatives, of all people, felt so safe that they became suspicious of the forces of law and order. Conservative activists were heard referring to police as "bureaucrats with badges"; right-wing talk radio dwelt on the atrocities committed by the FBI, the DEA, and other agencies at places like Ruby Ridge and Waco. Meanwhile, all across the political spectrum, interest in public life waned, along with the percentage of adults who bothered to vote. An easy cynicism settled across the land, as more people came to believe that national politics didn't really matter. What mattered instead, it seemed, were local affairs, community, intimate relations, and the construction of private paradises. When on rare occasions people talked about bitter conflict, they usually meant the fights they were having with their kitchen renovators.

Historians who want to grasp the style of morality that prevailed in the 1990s should go back to the work of sociologist Alan Wolfe. In books like *One Nation, After All* and *Moral Freedom*, Wolfe called the prevailing ethos "small scale morality." Be moderate in your beliefs, and tolerant toward people who have other beliefs. This is a moral code for people who are not threatened by any hostile belief system, who don't think it is worth it to stir up unpleasantness. "What I heard as I talked to Americans," Wolfe wrote of his research, "was a distaste for conflict, a sense that ideas should never be taken so seriously that they lead people into uncivil, let alone violent, courses of action."

But now violence has come calling. Now it is no longer possible to live so comfortably in one's own private paradise. Shocked out of the illusion of self-reliance, most of us realize that we, as individuals, simply cannot protect ourselves. Private life requires public protection. Now it is not possible to ignore foreign affairs, because foreign affairs have not ignored us. It has become clear that we are living in a world in which hundreds of millions of people hate us, and some small percentage of them want to destroy us. That realization is bound to have cultural effects.

In the first place, we will probably become more conscious of our American-ness. During the blitz in 1940, George Orwell sat in his bomb shelter and wrote an essay called "England Your England." It opened with this sentence: "As I write, highly civilised human beings are flying overhead, trying to kill me." What struck him at that moment of danger was that it really does matter whether you are English or German. The nation is a nursemaid

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that breeds certain values and a certain ethos. Orwell went on to describe what it meant to be English.

Now Americans are being killed simply because they are Americans. Like Orwell, Americans are once again becoming aware of themselves as a nationality, not just as members of some ethnic community or globalized Internet chat group. Americans have been reminded that, despite what the multiculturalists have been preaching, not all cultures are wonderfully equal hues in the great rainbow of humanity. Some national cultures, the ones that have inherited certain ideas—about freedom and democracy, the limits of the political claims of religion, the importance of tolerance and dissent—are more humane than other civilizations, which reject those ideas.

As criticism of our war effort grows in Europe, in hostile Arab countries, and in two-faced countries like Egypt and Saudi Arabia, which dislike our principles but love our dollars, Americans will have to articulate a defense of our national principles and practices. That debate in itself will shape American culture. We will begin to see ourselves against the backdrop of the Taliban. During the Cold War, we saw ourselves in contrast to the Soviet Union. Back then, we faced a godless foe; now we are facing a god-crazed foe. As we recoil from the Islamic extremists, we may be less willing to integrate religion into political life. That would mean trouble for faith-based initiatives and religion in the public square.

On the other hand, democracies tend to become patriotic during wartime, if history is any guide, and this will drive an even deeper wedge between regular Americans and the intellectual class. Literary critic Paul Fussell, a great student of American culture in times of war, wrote a book, *Wartime*, on the cultural effects of World War II. Surveying the culture of that period, he endorsed the view of historian Eileen Sullivan, who wrote, "There was no room in this war culture for individual opinions or personalities, no freedom of dissent or approval; the culture was homogeneous, shallow and boring."

The earnest conformity that does prevail in wartime drives intellectuals—who like to think of themselves as witty, skeptical, iconoclastic dissidents—batty. They grow sour, and alienated from mainstream life. For every regular Joe who follows the Humphrey Bogart path in *Casablanca*, from cynicism to idealism, there is an intellectual like Fussell, whose war experiences moved him from idealism to lifetime cynicism.

There are other cultural effects. For example, commercial life seems less important than public life, and economic reasoning seems less germane than cultural analysis. When life or death fighting is going on, it's hard to think of Bill Gates or Jack Welch as particularly heroic. Moreover, the cost-benefit analysis dear to economists doesn't really explain much in times of war. Osama bin Laden is not motivated by economic self-interest, and neither are our men and women who are risking their lives to defeat him. To understand such actions, you need to study history, religion, and ethics. The people who try to explain events via economic reasoning begin to look silly. Here is the otherwise intelligent economist Steve Hanke, in *Forbes*, analyzing bin Laden:

> Don't make the mistake of interpreting the events of Sept. 11 purely in terms of terrorism and murder. . . . The terrorists are a virulent subset of a much larger group of anti-capitalists, one that includes many politicians, bureaucrats, writers, media types, academics, entertainers, trade unionists and, at times, church leaders. The barbarians at the gates are more numerous than you thought.

But the most important cultural effect of conflict is that it breeds a certain bloody-mindedness or, to put it more grandly, a tragic view of life. Life in times of war and recession reminds us of certain hard truths that were easy to ignore during the decade of peace and prosperity. Evil exists. Difficulties, even tragedies, are inevitable. Human beings are flawed creatures capable of monstrosity. Not all cultures are compatible. To preserve order, good people must exercise power over destructive people.

That means that it's no longer sufficient to deconstruct ideas and texts and signifiers. You have to be able to construct hard principles so you can move from one idea to the next, because when you are faced with the problem of repelling evil, you absolutely must be able to reach a conclusion on serious moral issues.

This means you need to think in moral terms about force—and to be tough-minded. During the Cold War, Reinhold Niebuhr was a major intellectual figure. In 1952, he wrote *The Irony of American History*. The tragedy of the conflict with communism, he argued, was that, "though confident of its virtue, [America] must yet hold atomic bombs ready for use so as to prevent a possible world conflagration." The irony of our history, he continued, is that we are an idealistic nation that dreams of creating a world of pure virtue, yet in defeating our enemies we sometimes have to act in ways that are not pure. "We take, and must continue to take, morally hazardous action to preserve our civilization," Niebuhr wrote. "We must exercise our power." We have to do so while realizing that we will not be capable of perfect disinterestedness when deciding which actions are just. We will be influenced by dark passions. But we still have to act forcefully because our enemies are trying to destroy the basis of civilization: "We are drawn into an historic situation in which the paradise of our

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domestic security is suspended in a hell of global insecurity."

Niebuhr's prescription was humble hawkishness. He believed the United States should forcefully defend freedom and destroy its enemies. But while doing so, it should seek forgiveness for the horrible things it might have to do in a worthy cause.

To reach this graduate-school level of sophistication, you have to have passed through elementary courses in moral reasoning. It will be interesting to see whether we Americans, who sometimes seem unsure of even the fundamental moral categories, can educate ourselves sufficiently to engage in the kind of moral reasoning that Niebuhr did.

The greatest political effect of this period of conflict will probably be to relegitimize central institutions. Since we can't defend ourselves as individuals against terrorism, we have to rely on the institutions of government: the armed forces, the FBI, the CIA, the CDC, and so on. We are now only beginning to surrender some freedoms, but we will trade in more, and willingly. As Alexander Hamilton wrote in the Federalist Papers, "Safety from external danger is the most powerful director of national conduct. Even the ardent love of liberty will, after a time, give way to its dictates. . . . To be more safe, [people] at length become willing to run the risk of being less free." Moreover, we will see power migrate from the states and Capitol Hill to the White House. "It is of the nature of war to increase the executive at the expense of the legislative authority," Hamilton continued.

Many literary and academic liberals have built a moral system around powerlessness. They champion the outgroups. They stand with the victims.

This creates rifts on both left and right, because both movements contain anti-establishment elements hostile to any effort to relegitimize central authorities. The splits have been most spectacular on the left. Liberals who work in politics—Democrats on Capitol Hill, liberal activists, academics who are interested in day-to-day politics—almost all support President Bush and the war effort. But many academic and literary leftists, ranging from Eric Foner to Susan Sontag to Noam Chomsky, have been sour, critical, and contemptuous of America's response to September 11. The central difference is that the political liberals are comfortable with power. They want power themselves and do not object to the central institutions of government, even the military, exercising power on our behalf.

Many literary and academic liberals, on the other hand, have built a whole moral system around powerlessness. They champion the outgroups. They stand with the victims of hegemony, patriarchy, colonialism, and all the other manifestations of central authority. Sitting on their campuses, they are powerless themselves, and have embraced a delicious, self-glorifying identity as the outmanned sages who alone can see through the veils of propaganda in which the powerful hide their oppressive schemes. For these thinkers, virtue inheres in the powerless. The weak are sanctified, not least because they are voiceless and allegedly need academics to give them voices. These outgroup leftists dislike the Taliban, but to ally themselves with American power would be to annihilate everything they have stood for and the role they have assigned themselves in society.

The splits on the right have been quieter, but no less important. Anti-establishmentarianism on the right comes in libertarian and populist forms. Its adherents have noticed that during wartime, the power of the state tends to expand. "Wars are nasty things: They make governments grow," Grover Norquist of Americans for Tax Reform told the *Washington Post*. This skepticism applies not only to any new social programs that might emerge in this centralizing moment, but to proposals to strengthen the forces of law and order. "We don't like the bad guys either. But let's not sacrifice our freedoms because the FBI and CIA want more power," Norquist told the *Boston Globe*.

Since September 11, conservatives have broken down into two camps: those who fear that Bush will go squishy on Iraq, and those who fear that he will go squishy on capital gains. The conservatives who fear that the United States won't take out Saddam are national security conservatives. They don't think it's worth getting into a big fight over reducing taxes at a moment of national crisis. They value free market reforms, but believe that right now other conservative agenda items should take a back seat to national security.

The libertarian, anti-government, "leave us alone" conservatives, such as Dick Armey and Tom DeLay, believe Bush should use his popularity to push through

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capital gains tax reductions and the like. They detest the domestic bipartisanship that Bush has cultivated on Capitol Hill. They believe that national security arguments should not be used to strengthen the hand of Washington.

On balance, George W. Bush is behaving more like a national security conservative (without, of course, committing himself on Iraq). He embraces every Democrat he can wrap his arms around. He has tried to reduce partisan conflict on the stimulus package. He would not even think of raising divisive social issues. He seeks to clear the domestic front so he can focus on the fight against terror. No longer the compassionate conservative, he has, with impressive decisiveness, turned himself into a fighting conservative.

What the Bush administration is now presenting, and what the public seems to want, is Rudy Giuliani-ism on a global scale. Giuliani took over a city plagued by crime and apparently ungovernable. He didn't stop to ponder the root causes of crime, or whether the '60s had sent America into irreversible decline. Giuliani is not even particularly interested in the general moral fabric of the city. He's not conservative on the social issues. Instead, he's interested in preventing acts of disorder. He is a guy who sits around with his friends watching the *Godfather* movies and reciting the lines. He simply went after the bad guys and the actual things they did to create disorder. He and his police commissioners worked aggressively to arrest people who broke the law.

By doing this, Giuliani restored order, so that New Yorkers could go out and live whatever sorts of lives they wanted to lead. His approach was: Every morning you strap on your armor and you go out to battle the evil ones. It's more important to be feared than loved. You maneuver situations so as to get your rivals in the place where you want them to be. Then they have to make concessions. His instinct was always: Give me authority. Hold me accountable.

For Bush, the leader of the free world, the issue is terrorism, not street crime. But now he too is engaged in the effort to restore order so that people can go about their lives. He is the one rounding up the posse, forsaking social issues and other moral debates for a straightforward act of international prosecution. He is reasserting authority to show that under Pax Americana, the world *is* governable.

What we may end up with, therefore, is an America in which the old split between hawks and doves is no longer relevant. Instead our political landscape will have a few intellectuals on the fringes, while the main argument unfolds—to borrow Machiavelli's terms—between the lions and the foxes. Lions believe in the aggressive use of power. For them the main danger is appeasement. They worry that we will be half-hearted and never really tackle our problems. Foxes, by contrast, believe you have to move cleverly and subtly. They worry that America will act unilaterally and tear its coalition and trample upon our own freedoms.

It's interesting that the people who are lions on foreign policy also tend to be lions on domestic policy, while the foxes are fox-like both abroad and at home. So we have new arguments. Do we give higher priority to cracking down on domestic terror or preserving civil liberties? Do we give higher priority to destroying all terrorist states, or to preserving our alliances? In these debates, so far, THE WEEKLY STANDARD, the *New Republic*, and the *Washington Post* have made the case for the lions. The *New York Times*, Robert Novak, Hillary Clinton, Colin Powell, Barney Frank, and Jack Kemp have supported the foxes. It may truly be a strange new world.

At the start of the Civil War, nobody could have foreseen how the war would alter the domestic political culture, producing a raft of legislation ranging from the Homestead Act to the transcontinental railway to currency reform. The war ended with a grand march by the Union armies through Washington, an event that symbolized America's emergence as a unified nation and a superpower in the making. "Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained," Lincoln declared in his Second Inaugural. "Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding."

It's impossible to know if the renewed confidence in government that we already see will translate into a new sort of big government activism, as some liberals are predicting. There is certainly precedent for that, as writers like Robert Nisbet (in *The Present Age*) and Robert Higgs (in *Crisis and Leviathan*) have shown. War, Randolph Bourne observed in 1917, "is the health of the state."

But history never repeats itself neatly. No one can predict the political and cultural consequences of a war, any more than the course of the war itself. But it does seem clear that we have moved out of one political and cultural moment and into another. We have traded the anxieties of affluence for the real fears of war. We have moved from an age of peace to an age of conflict, and in times of conflict people are different. They go to extremes. Some people, and some nations, turn cowardly or barbaric. Other people, and other nations, become heroic, brave, and steadfast. It all depends on what they have in them. War isn't only, as Bourne said, the health of the state. It's the gut-check of the nation. ♦

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Pakistan's Taliban Problem

And America's Pakistan problem

By Reuel Marc Gerecht

After the September 11 attack, a sharp anti-Pakistani sentiment rippled through the U.S. government. Even in the Department of State and the Central Intelligence Agency, where Pakistan's staunchest supporters have usually been found, foreign service officers, operatives, and analysts voiced a feeling of betrayal. "The Paks have totally let us down," remarked a former senior intelligence official who'd been fond of Islamabad for twenty years.

Though U.S.-Pakistani relations were strained for a decade—by Islamabad's nuclear weapons program, its separatist, holy war in India-controlled Kashmir, its support for the Taliban, protector of Osama bin Laden, and more—Washington's longstanding diplomatic, intelligence, and military ties with Islamabad braked the growing doubts about Pakistan's pro-American credentials. So, too, the attractive character of elite Pakistani officials. Compared with their haughty Indian and chaotic Afghan neighbors, Pakistani VIPs are often wittier, warmer, and more knowledgeable about the insider gossip of U.S. politics. American diplomats and spooks often have a good deal of fun with their Westernized Pakistani counterparts. As one congressional staffer, who frequently visits south-central Asia, succinctly put it, "I like 'em; the Indians are jerks." But a week after the World Trade Center and Pentagon bombings, India would've beat out its neighbor in any popularity contest in Washington.

Now, Pakistan has a second chance, thanks to its nimble leader General Pervez Musharraf, and thanks to entrenched American bureaucratic habits and Washington's uneasiness about a protracted war in Afghanistan, an ethnic smorgasbord of a land defined by mountains, deserts, landmines, and undisciplined, highly fractious, roughneck peasants. The American strategy for dealing with bin Laden and his spiritual twin, the Taliban chieftain Mullah Omar, consists of limited military aid to the anti-Taliban, anti-Pakistani Northern Alliance; calibrated, small-scale, slowly escalating military operations; CIA covert action aimed at switching allegiances among the Taliban's Pashtun ethnic power-base; public appeals to the "moderate Taliban" to abandon bin Laden and Mullah Omar; a call for the United Nations to assume a "post-Taliban" nation-building role in Afghanistan; and direct financial subventions to Islamabad and drastically reduced textile tariffs for Pakistani goods exported to the United States. This strategy is designed, in part, to assuage Musharraf's concerns and enlist Pakistan as a cooperative and stable partner in America's "war on terrorism."

The specter of a nuclear-armed Pakistan descending into an Islamic revolution, which isn't a far-fetched possibility, encourages Washington to acquiesce further to Pakistan's preferences for fear that Musharraf is the last wall against the fundamentalist hordes.

Unfortunately, this Pakistan-centered approach is likely to do the opposite of what Ambassador Richard Haass, Secretary of State Colin Powell's special Afghan coordinator, intends. Not only could we conceivably lose the war in Afghanistan through a Pakistan-centered strategy—if bin Laden, Mullah Omar, and the Taliban power structure are still alive and kicking in six months, we will have probably lost the battle in the eyes of the Middle East's ordinary Muslims, let alone the region's suicide-seeking holy warriors—we could witness Pakistan become even more of a *place d'armes* for Islamic radicalism. A quick run through Pakistani history should show how risky are the assumptions and policy that the Bush administration has so far put into motion.

Created on August 15, 1947, from the northern, primarily Muslim provinces of British India, Pakistan isn't really a nation-state. It is a geographic expression of an age-old Islamic ideal: Muslims should not, if at all possible, live under non-Muslim rule. Living

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under the all-mighty British was unpleasant for many—though by no means all—subcontinent Muslims. Living under the far more numerous Hindus, whom the Muslim Mogul dynasty had dominated for centuries before the arrival of the English, was worse. For the English-educated Muslim elite, it was intolerable, and they enthusiastically laid the idea of a Western nation-state over the religious imperative of a Muslim-ruled polity. Gandhi's Indian democracy was going to be Hindu, so a Muslim "Land of the Pure"—the literal meaning of Pakistan—was essential to protect and nurture the faithful.

The intensity of Pakistan's Islamic identity has been increasing ever since. It has been the primary force sustaining Pakistani pride and hope through the post-colonial mess. Through a succession of aborted, corrupt democratic governments and equally corrupt military dictatorships. Through an enormous population explosion and a massive emigration of the country's most intrepid citizens to the West. Through the failed wars with India and the successful Pakistani-supported Afghan fight against the Soviet Red Army, which left millions of Afghan refugees ensconced south of the increasingly meaningless border, forever changing the frontier's population, politics, and culture. Through the ever-more-brutal anti-Hindu Muslim-separatist struggle in Kashmir, which further solidified the ties between militants and the ordinary faithful in Pakistan. And through increasing Sunni-Shiite sectarian violence, which has further reinforced hard-core Sunni politics throughout the country, and often turns Karachi, Pakistan's sweating monster city, into a shooting gallery.

For over twenty years, Pakistan has been supporting an array of militant Islamic groups inside Afghanistan. During the Soviet-Afghan War (1980-89), Pakistan's dictator, Zia al-Haqq, made Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, a fire-breathing Islamic militant, Islamabad's favorite Afghan guerrilla leader. In 1995, the Western-educated prime minister, Benazir Bhutto (Salman Rushdie's not-so-fictional "Miss Iron Pants"), and her right-hand man, General Nasirullah Babar, abandoned Hikmatyar for the intellectually more primitive, though no less militant, Taliban (literally "the students"), who'd sprung in late 1994 from the hundreds of religious schools, the madrassas, located on both sides of the Pakistani-Afghan border.

Tactical and commercial considerations—the Taliban, unlike Hikmatyar, proved successful at guaranteeing the safety and profitability of Pakistan's trans-Afghan truck-borne trade—appealed to Pakistan's realpoliticians and businessmen. At the same time, the Taliban's transcendent fundamentalist faith, like the radicalism of Hikmatyar, offered the possibility that Pakistan's influence wouldn't be blocked by Afghanistan's myriad ethnic and tribal parochialisms. Religious identity politics, which the Soviet-Afghan war and Zia al-Haqq kicked into overdrive, enlarged the common ground between Islamic militants in Afghanistan and in Pakistan's military and intelligence services and political parties. The shared zealous faith was profitably manifested in massive cross-border smuggling and drug-running that tied the daily livelihood and retirement plans of Pakistani officialdom in the Northwest Frontier Province to the health and wealth of the young Pashtun warriors of the Taliban.

Now what Secretary of State Powell and Ambassador Haass are suggesting is that General Musharraf can and will stand athwart his country's history and yell, "Stop!" Musharraf, who recently described the United States as "the lesser of two evils" (the other evil, by the way, wasn't bin Laden, but the possibility that Pakistan could get caught in a war between the United States and the Saudi militant), is most unlikely to be so foolish, even *if* he is so ideologically inclined.

He probably knows, even if Christiane Amanpour of CNN does not, that bin Laden is immensely popular in Pakistan, as he is throughout the Middle East. The general is very much aware of the facts on the ground: There are over 8,000 officially registered religious schools in Pakistan. According to Pakistani journalist Ahmed Rashid, the author of *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil & Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, there are over 25,000 unregistered ones. In 1971, Rashid informs us, there were only 900 madrassas in all. The most famous religious school in Pakistan, the Dar al-Ulum Haqqania of the delightfully witty, hard-core fundamentalist Samiul Haq, had in 1999 over 15,000 applicants for only 400 spots. The intellectual cradle of the Taliban's leadership, the Haqqania has periodically deployed its students across the border as reserve soldiers for major Taliban offensives.

Many of these schools are partially funded by Saudi charitable and missionary institutions. They are the most durable products of the Great Sunni Counterattack against the Shiite Iranian revolution in 1979. Fearful of Iranian "radicalism," the Saudis sent funds and missionaries to support their own "conservative" Wahhabi fundamentalism throughout the Muslim world. The Saudi-Pakistani nexus, originally a bulwark against Shiite and Soviet adventurism, has nurtured a new and lethal generation of anti-American true believers. It is the fundamentalists—not the highly Westernized Pakistani elite, who still attend schools with proper English names—who likely have a lock-grip on the Pakistani mind.

Confronted with the religious reality of his own country, Musharraf, who is already being teased by the fundamentalists as "Bisharaf" ("The Dishonorable One"), will probably engage in what has worked well in the past, especially with Americans: the Pakistani two-step. He'll move

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toward both the Americans and the fundamentalists, promising them irreconcilable things. He *will* be a party to the U.S. war effort, at least for now, and he *will* continue to aid Islamic militants in Afghanistan (who will now be renamed the new, "moderate" Taliban) and Kashmir.

He will continue the long Pakistani tradition, which has become the standard modus operandi for Muslim rulers throughout the Middle East, of co-opting and adopting fundamentalist aspirations and methods. With one hand, Musharraf will, if pushed, beat the fundamentalists on the street and briefly lock up their leaders. With the other, he will assuage them and solidify his rule by not really rocking the boat. He may have removed senior pro-Taliban military and intelligence officials; but the increasingly fundamentalist rank and file of these institutions, who truly embody their ethos, remain unharassed, if not nourished. And in his heart, Musharraf may well not want to rock the boat. The slow-motion "Talibanization" of Pakistan will continue even as Washington and Islamabad solemnly reaffirm their mutual commitment to the war against terrorism, or jointly proclaim, sometime in the future, victory over bin Laden's al Qaeda, which for years has had a Kashmir-focused liaison relationship with the Pakistani military and intelligence services.

Fortunately, the United States doesn't have to get stuck in this "pro-Pakistani" tar pit. A war is always a work in progress, and comments by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld about increasing military support to the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance may finally be translated into deliveries of Russian and Uzbek Soviet-era tanks and helicopters, which are essential for any successful anti-Taliban war effort. The increased tactical bombing in coordination with the Alliance offers the hope that Washington (or at least the Pentagon) is beginning to understand that an anti-Taliban victory among the Pashtuns is very unlikely unless preceded by a clear-cut military victory of the Northern Alliance in Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif, Herat, and the strategic linchpin city of the northwest, Sheberghan.

If the months pass and bin Laden and Mullah Omar remain alive, and the Pashtun power base behind the Taliban doesn't fracture, the Bush administration will more acutely understand that the State Department's desire to devise in advance a "post-Taliban" game plan works against the more important military and strategic objective of actually waging a real ground war. Which means, first and foremost, the annihilation of the Taliban's fighting forces, effectively ending the Taliban state. We should not be surprised to have so far seen few Pashtun defections to the Northern Alliance or to Musharraf's "new" Pakistan. The Taliban hard core are numerous—the ideological elixir of Mullah Omar and bin Laden is seductive, and true believers don't switch sides in difficult times. And, more important, the U.S. war against terrorism in Afghanistan isn't yet serious, at least from the Afghan perspective. We know this to be true just by listening to the Taliban spokesmen. Their announced casualty figures, which are probably exaggerated, have remained quite low—hundreds here and there.

Make a comparison: When the Israelis invaded Lebanon in 1982, Yasser Arafat and the Red Crescent quite quickly claimed that the Israeli army had killed hundreds of thousands, indeed, had slaughtered more Palestinians than were actually living in Lebanon. In the enormous exaggerations was a painful truth: Israel had broken the back of the PLO through conventional war. Calibrated U.S. bombing runs that have left all of the Taliban front lines essentially intact aren't the terrifying onslaught we let loose on the Iraqis in the Gulf War. The Taliban surely know this. And the official American anxiety about waging war during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which gets immediately relayed via CNN, doesn't exactly make the holy-warrior crowd quake since they, like all Muslims, don't expect Muslims, let alone Western infidels, to slacken their fighting during the month.

If we really intend to intimidate, much less destroy, the Taliban, how can it be that they still routinely wage *offensive* operations against the Northern Alliance? Does the condign vengeance for 6,000 dead Americans now rest with the "formerly" pro-Taliban Pakistani intelligence and the omnicompetent CIA trying to find some covert way of getting Pashtun Afghans to switch sides?

Americans may not like thinking about vengeance—though this wasn't a problem for our fathers and grandfathers after Pearl Harbor—but this isn't true for the denizens of the Middle East. The capacity to inflict *intiqam*, vengeance, is there an essential element of power and dominion. If we do not scorch all those in the Middle East who gave aid to al Qaeda, we will mercilessly belittle ourselves before men who have an acute sense of the jugular. The Clinton administration repeatedly made the cardinal error of thinking others saw America as it wanted them to see America, of defining crime and punishment by oh-so-civilized modern standards. Madeleine Albright sounded tough so, by God, we were. Bin Laden nearly sank the USS *Cole* in the port of Aden in October 2000, and the administration solemnly promised, with clenched teeth, to track down those responsible, but did nothing.

Does it now, after September 11, really seem inhuman to suggest that at a minimum the Clinton administration should have napalmed the Taliban front lines for a month as a token repayment for the attack on a U.S. warship?

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And isn't the Bush administration now in danger of following in the same footsteps? As the war against terrorism drags on and becomes the protracted battle that the administration keeps warning us about, will we become more or less inclined to use awe-inspiring military force—the coin of the realm in the Middle East?

The State Department fears a "power vacuum" in Afghanistan, yet it is exactly a power vacuum for which we should strive. We want Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif, Sheberghan, and Herat—the four key points of northern Afghanistan—to fall as quickly as possible so that we can clearly signal to the Afghan Pashtuns that a price must be paid for the Taliban's mistakes. They must know that the geopolitical world is changing rapidly and irreversibly, that the peoples behind the Northern Alliance—the Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Shiite Hazara, who together constitute a majority of Afghanistan's population—will successfully assert on the battlefield, and in any national assembly of elders, the so-called *loya jirga*, that Taliban supremacy is over. We don't want to treat the Pashtuns as if they were a monolith. We want to play on the Pashtuns' historical divisions, between the Ghilzai and the Durrani, and among the numerous other Pashtun divisions that match the complex, varied geography of their Afghan homeland. In war, we absolutely want to play divide and conquer, especially in a disunited land. Divided, the Pashtuns are much more likely to betray bin Laden. When the Taliban are crushed and the United States isn't operating under the gun, we can try to glue together all the Afghan peoples.

The State Department fears a "power vacuum" in Afghanistan, yet it is exactly a power vacuum for which we should strive.

We absolutely don't want again to default to the Pakistanis, as we did in 1989 at the end of the Soviet-Afghan war, responsibility for the Afghan mess. We mustn't allow the Pashtun Pakistanis of the Northwest Frontier Province, who have become so intimately intertwined with the Taliban, to reestablish through any reconstituted and renamed Taliban alliance military control of the Pashtun regions of Afghanistan. We can't shut down, nor can Musharraf, the hundreds of religious schools that dot the Pakistani-Afghan frontier. But we can try to limit their influence by denying them an Afghan government through which madrassa-trained fundamentalist Pashtuns can again establish a mafia of like-minded zealots.

If the United States can demonstrate with speed and force its determination to punish brutally its enemies and reward its friends (through U.S. air power, ground troops, military aid, and financial subventions), Washington and those Afghans allied to it have a chance of gaining sufficient anti-Taliban Pashtun support to complicate greatly, if not thwart, the inevitable Pakistani effort, launched from the religious schools and Pakistan's religiously based political parties, to reestablish the Taliban social and political order north of the border. If that order returns, so, too, will the guerrilla and terrorist training camps for the holy warriors in Kashmir. So, too, will in all probability the training camps of al Qaeda, which U.S. air attacks cannot permanently eliminate (mud-brick houses are, so-to-speak, bomb-proof). Even if bin Laden and Mullah Omar are dead—and their passing will be real progress—the essential geopolitical building blocks of radical Islamic terrorism will remain. And this time round, the holy warriors will be fueled by the not unjustified impression that they triumphed over America.

Sooner rather than later, Washington needs to wean itself from its Pakistani dependency. We can't help Pakistan, which is a country full of America's friends, by wishfully hoping that Musharraf is a closet Atatürk. Even if he were, circumstances would still be decisively against him. We will help neither Pakistan nor Afghanistan by indulging Pakistani preferences among the Afghans. They have been and will remain irreconcilable with our own. If we allow ourselves to be blackmailed because of our fear of chaos in a nuclear-armed Muslim country, then we will surely get blackmailed repeatedly. Even our Pakistani friends would be hard pressed not to take us to the cleaners again and again.

The Talibanization of Pakistan will stop only when the Taliban in Afghanistan have been extirpated. Even if the Unites States starts to aid seriously the Taliban's Afghan foes, this battle may not be quick (though it will likely be pretty quick). But the battle may be endless if we castrate the all-important military campaign while we wait for a post-Taliban government to jell. The United States must have a victory sooner, not later, in Afghanistan. Our enemies in the Middle East must see that we are dead serious about eradicating in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the Middle East those who have drawn American blood. If bin Laden, Mullah Omar, and their Taliban cohorts are still alive come next spring, producing videocassettes trenchantly dissecting our weakness and the immorality of our Muslim "allies," then we will have hell to pay. No sane Muslim in the Middle East will then want to ally himself with the United States. No non-Muslim, either. ♦

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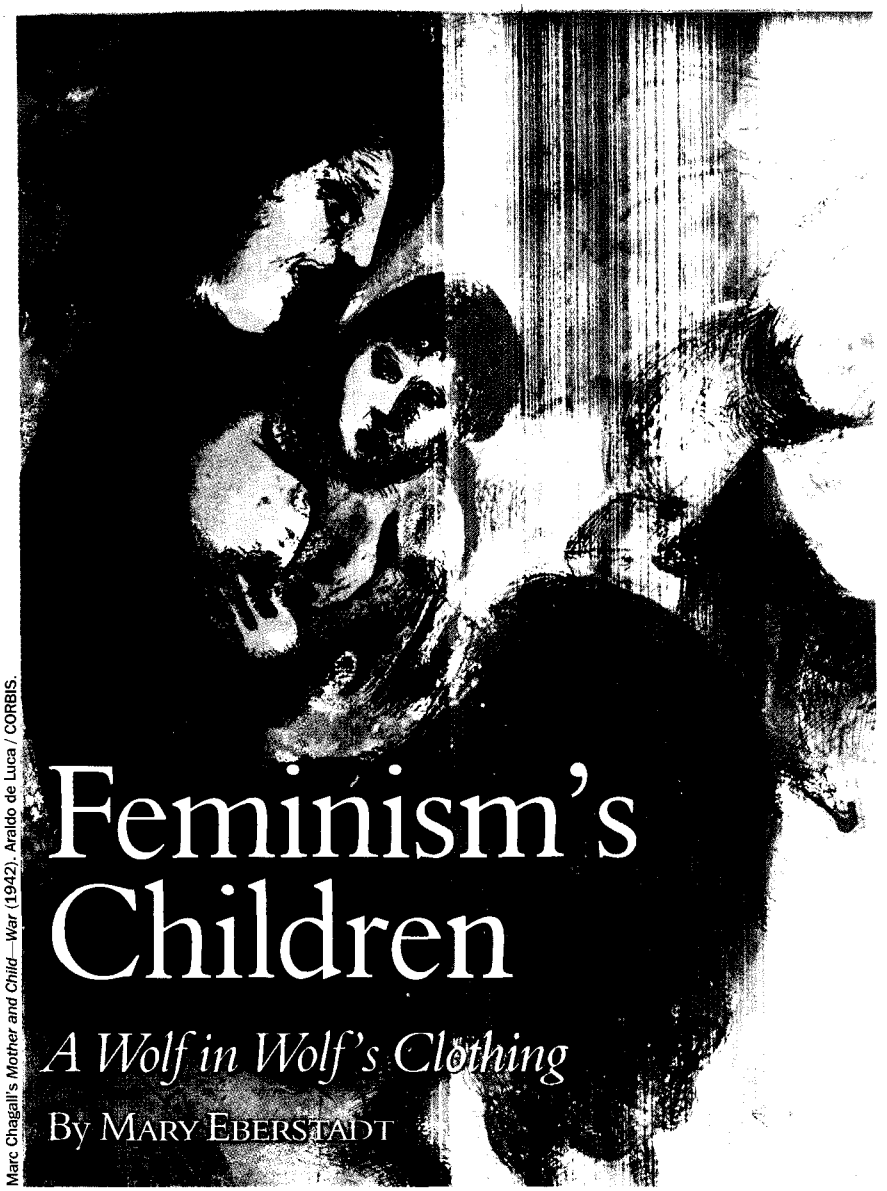

Marc Chagall's *Mother and Child—War* (1942). Araldo de Luca / CORBIS.

Feminism's Children

A Wolf in Wolf's Clothing

By Mary Eberstadt

Now that a real war has been engaged and an ideological truce declared on the home front, it is generally agreed that our criticism should be reserved for certain groups only—particularly those that advocate violence, promulgate stereotypes, and espouse hatred. This makes it an especially opportune time to check in on contemporary feminism, where a parable of sorts can be found in the twists and turns taken lately by one of its more popular practitioners.

Six years ago, Naomi Wolf—author of such works of "Third Wave" feminism as *The Beauty Myth*, *Promiscuities*, and, now, *Misconceptions: Truth, Lies, and the Unexpected on the Journey to Motherhood*—momentarily rocked the sisterhood with an essay in the *New Republic* provocatively entitled "Our Bodies, Our Souls: Re-Thinking Pro-Choice Rhetoric." A collection of propositions guaranteed to outrage orthodox believers in "choice," the essay proved an instant media hit. Pro-choice feminists, Wolf declared, had "relinquished the moral frame around the issue of abortion." They had "dehumanized" the contents of a pregnant woman's womb and failed to acknowledge that "the death of a fetus is a real death."

Misconceptions
Truth, Lies, and the Unexpected on the Journey to Motherhood
by Naomi Wolf
Doubleday, 326 pp., $24.95

These and other apparent concessions to the pro-life movement, issuing as they did from one of the premiere exponents of neo-orthodox feminism, naturally raised eyebrows. In retrospect, however, what made Wolf's *New Republic* performance worth remembering was not its heresies, but rather, what she concluded—or more accurately, failed to conclude—from them. For far from finding that abortion must, after all, be profoundly wrong, Wolf simply asserted that, despite it all, "abortion should be legal"; that, as she put the point brutally at the close of her essay, "sometimes the mother must be able to decide that the fetus, in its full humanity, must die."

Wolf's position, stripped of its pro-life rhetorical concessions, amounted to the claim that the fetus is human *and* that it is still okay to kill it; or more exactly, that one may kill a fetus *if and only if* its humanity is first recognized. Such a ritualized view of fetal destruction—in which killing is unobjectionable, even routine, so long as it is accompanied by the right words and sentiments—was peculiar even by the battle-hardened standards of feminist rhetoric about abortion. One might almost call it an intuitive Nietzscheanism, if such were not unfair to Nietzsche.

What made it even more peculiar was that Wolf (not unlike Gloria Steinem of the generation before) has long projected one of the more appealing personas of her crowd. Wolf's book-jacket photos, for example, make her look pretty and warm. She is neither humorless like the Robespierrean Susan Faludi nor ferocious like Catherine MacKinnon. Moreover, having married and given birth to two children, Wolf is not representative of what might be called the monastic wing of feminism; her writing on men and children is shaped by the fact that she actually knows some. And while her books, as Christina Hoff Sommers and other critics have demonstrated, fall somewhat short of scholarship,

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they do have an earnestness—indeed, a girlish enthusiasm—that distinguishes them from the dour Leninism in which so many of her contemporaries wallow. In short, if current feminism can be said to have a human face, Naomi Wolf is it—which is exactly why her latest book, *Misconceptions*, carries a weight that other feminist treatments of pregnancy and motherhood do not.

In keeping with the myth-busting rhetoric of her previous efforts, Wolf intends *Misconceptions* to be an exploration of "the hidden truths behind giving birth in America today"—truths about how motherhood is "undersupported, sentimentalized, and even manipulated at women's expense." As in Wolf's own *The Beauty Myth* or Faludi's *Backlash*, the intended formula here is clear: to listen to "the full spectrum of stories that women confess to one another, including stories that they intuit they must not speak out loud in our culture," in the hopes of exposing the dark "truths" about pregnancy and birth in America.

Primary among those "stories," as it happens, is Wolf's own. From the opening of chapter one where she finds herself praying (at a chic wedding in Italy) that she is not, in fact, pregnant, to the closing "Mother's Manifesto" calling for flex time, on-site day care, expanded playground babysitting, and just about anything else that makes it easier to separate mothers from their children (i.e., "better, happier parenting"), this book documents the author's profound ambivalence about her own experience of pregnancy and childbirth. What lies between the covers is a wide-ranging monologue of complaint about almost every aspect of pregnancy and birth, including pregnancy handbooks, weight gain, cesarean sections, episiotomies, cold hands, 1980s medical-office architecture, maternity clothes, suburbia, childbirth classes, hospital decorating schemes, obstetrical checkups, fetal monitors, anesthesia, diaper bags, park benches, and much more.

Wolf's unhappiness over what motherhood required is real enough. Other women, for example, suffer morning sickness; Wolf was "sick daily until my child was delivered," at times "throwing up five times in seven hours." Other women find that pregnancy makes them more sensitive and emotional; Wolf gets "cursed with what felt like a sixth sense to detect death and decay." Other women dread their confinement on the delivery table; only Wolf looks back at herself "strapped down as if on a crucifix." Likewise, life with baby quite naturally makes many women feel tied down; but who else would write, "I feared I would be chained forever to our bilious couch, sucked on all day by a hungry newborn, like Prometheus chained to a rock"?

Naomi Wolf

SAGA / Frank Capri.

And, perhaps inevitably, where other women get what used to be called the "baby blues" (the days immediately following birth when profound hormonal changes, combined with fatigue, leave many women low in spirits), Wolf's post-partum turns out to be only the beginning of a prolonged tumble into an abyss, a depression that—despite her "crazy love" for her baby—"did not lift," she reports, "until six months later."

It is this part of the book, when the pain and uncertainty of childbirth itself are over and a healthy child has been delivered to the author's arms, that catapults *Misconceptions* from ordinary Boomer ingratitude into territory thickly pathological. For despite her extraordinary advantages—a healthy baby, a hardworking husband, a big suburban house, the money to afford help, a rewarding career she can continue at least part-time—Wolf simply cannot rally to maternal happiness. The house is "cavernous"; the help, morally problematic. The playground is uncomfortable, the driving onerous, and her career, to her evident shock, is on the back burner while her husband's is not. Moreover, while she does love the baby—and Wolf's prose on this subject certainly rings true, albeit constantly qualified by complaint—even weeks after childbirth she "still had a hard time thinking of her by name" because "of my emerging depression and because of my trauma-slowed sense of understanding her fully as a child."

This catastrophic experience of motherhood, Wolf further reports, is widely shared among her contemporaries—or it would be, if only "the taboo against voicing our fears and bowdlerizing our experiences can be broken." "I wish someone had told me how unbelievably bloody and violent [birth] would be." "I wish someone could have let me know I would lose my self in the process of becoming a mother—and that I would need to mourn that self." "I feel that there is this intruder in the house who is never going to go away," one of the author's friends tells her. Like her, "many women I talked to" also appear to have had traumatic deliveries (or what Wolf calls "ordinary bad births"). Most experience "a sense of acute social demotion that came with motherhood"; even worse, "all around me, no matter how much the couple adored the baby and one another, the marriages were in upheaval." At one point, Wolf produces a long list of negative feelings ("I feel so ugly," "I feel so nervous," "I feel like a failure," "I cry all the time," "I feel so ashamed," etc.), informing us that "most of these feel-

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ings were shared to some extent, at some time, by me, and by most of the new moms I knew."

Exactly how awful *are* the experiences of these women? One "walks the street wondering what's the easiest way to kill myself." Another is in therapy. Most profess sexual unhappiness, and several continue to look awful even months and months after their babies are born. Motherhood has pushed them to the brink, perhaps beyond. "There were times she had to walk right away from her shrieking Daisy, go into her bedroom, close the door, and pray, just to keep from harming herself or her daughter," Wolf reports of one.

Cari Melchers's Mother and Child With Oranges (1892). Peter Harholdt / CORBIS

Considered as polemical argument, *Misconceptions* is a contradictory mess. Wolf complains, for example, about how excruciating childbirth is, and she also complains about the very drugs and procedures that—miraculously and for the first time in human history—ameliorate that agony. She reports in bitter detail about her cesarean birth at the hands of a state-of-the-art medical team, only to inform cheerily in a postscript that her second birth, at the hands of politically correct midwives, turned out to be a cesarean, too. She excoriates "society" for not doing enough to support new mothers, exactly as if the feminist ideology she cherishes had not been the chief instrument of the demotion of motherhood these last several decades. She writes contemptuously of the new fathers who hustle off to work right away and leave women to do the childcare; but one can only imagine how withering her prose would have been if the men of her acquaintance had *not* decided that providing for their new families was a full-time job.

And, of course, as in her *New Republic* essay six years ago, Wolf mires herself once again in a monumental contradiction over abortion. On the one hand, she is avowedly "a pro-choice woman." On the other hand, her "attitudes about abortion were shifting like magma under the ocean floor, caused by upheavals too deep to see."

As before, however, those "upheavals" make no dent in Wolf's own advocacy. In a particular burst of Nietzschean enthusiasm, she even dragoons her own fetus into serving the pro-abortion cause, reporting, "I cherished that nose and those hands [in her unborn child's sonogram picture]. But I felt: I am not fooled. And I could swear that, when it had looked at me, it had conveyed this directly to me: Yes, I will be a human baby eventually, small, helpless, new, and wholly lovable. But not yet."

It is tempting, of course, to dismiss Naomi Wolf's *Misconceptions* as just one more example of Boomer solipsism run amok, as the book's reviewers have tended to do. Thus *Publishers Weekly* went out of its way to slam the book as a "weirdly out-of-touch bid for personal attention," while the *Washington Post* found it "self-indulgent" and "self-aggrandizing." Even the *New York Times*, though generally kind, called Wolf a "maddening writer" who "betrays the reader's sympathy." Underlying at least some of this criticism is a sense that Wolf has failed feminism by putting herself, rather than her ideology, at center stage—that, as the *Post* put it, "by writing poorly, arguing worse, she lets down her side."

In fact, however, these criticisms are unfair to Wolf, who has delivered with *Misconceptions* something deep and authentic about her time and place. This *is* actually how she and other feminists think; it *is* the way her friends and acquaintances talk. Contrary to what its detractors say, this book is more than a memoir; it is also, and despite the episodic appeal of Wolf's earnestness, the latest entry in a genre of feminist works explicitly and self-consciously ambivalent about birth and children and mothering.

The cold eye that *Misconceptions* casts over motherhood has a pedigree. In her new memoir, *An Old Wife's Tale*, Midge Decter mentions in passing "the horrible things said about the very young by the likes of such feminist heroines as Gloria Steinem and Germaine Greer—not to mention the mother of them all, Simone de Beauvoir." Anyone who has survived an

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AP / Wide World Photos

Marching for the Equal Rights Amendment, July 9, 1978.

encounter with "women's studies" will know just what Decter means about the grudge such writers bear against offspring. As the dissident Elizabeth Fox-Genovese observed in *Feminism Is Not the Story of My Life*, what Betty Friedan famously called the "problem without a name" does indeed have a name: children.

Wolf also echoes unwittingly another extraordinary and insufficiently remarked-upon trend in contemporary feminist writing: the flirtation with what might be called the "root causes" of child abuse. Some years ago, writing in the now-defunct magazine *Contentions*, Neal Kozodoy zeroed in on one early example of this genre, a 1988 *New York Times* piece called "'Good' Mothers Feel Dark Urges." In it, a corporate lawyer and mother pondered how "every week now we hear of another young mother assaulting or even murdering her infant," and pronounced that those women and she were "sisters under the skin." For "a woman who puts her two-month-old son 'under the water until he stopped crying' is not a different species of animal than I," the mother-lawyer opined.

Bizarre though it seemed at the time, this small declaration of moral equivalence proved only the beginning. In the years since, woman-friendly rationalizations of child abuse and murder have become a common part of the media cycle that follows instances of abandonment or infanticide. Just a few years ago, evolutionary psychologist Steven Pinker even lent scientific patina to such efforts in the *New York Times* Sunday magazine, observing of several such high-profile cases that "to a biologist, birth is as arbitrary a milestone as any other." "Several moral philosophers," he went on, "have concluded that neonates [i.e., babies] are not persons, and thus neonaticide [i.e., baby killing] should not be classified as murder."

As Michael Kelly put it in a vehement critical response, "The article by Steven Pinker in the *Times* magazine did not go quite so far as to openly recommend the murder of infants, and printing the article did not constitute the *Times*'s endorsement of the idea. But close enough, close enough." Following the dots that connect abortion to infanticide, Kelly also acknowledged: "Of all the arguments advanced against the legalization of abortion, the one that always struck me as the most questionable is the most consequential: that the widespread acceptance of abortion would lead to a profound moral shift in our culture, a great devaluing of human life." He had been skeptical of this particular slippery slope, Kelly emphasized. But "this time, it seems, the pessimists were right."

Who could possibly refute it? Just last summer, in another free fall down the slippery slope that also attracted public outcry (most sharply from John Podhoretz in the *New York Post*), celebrity feminist Anna Quindlen offered up these stunning reflections on the case of Andrea Yates, the mother who drowned her five children in a bathtub:

> Every mother I've asked about the Yates case has the same reaction. She's appalled; she's aghast. And then she gets this look. And the look says that at some forbidden level she understands. The look says that there are two very different kinds of horror here. There is the unimaginable idea of the killings. And then there is the entirely imaginable idea of going quietly bonkers in the house with five kids under the age of seven.

Nor was Quindlen the only feminist to seize on the Yates case as an opportunity to declare solidarity with child murderesses. The Houston branch of NOW actually started a "support group" for Yates's defense ("one of our feminist beliefs is to be there for other women," explained the chapter president). Patricia Ireland simultaneously ventured that the Yates murders were the outcome of American patriarchy, where "women are imprisoned at home with their children." Even more audaciously, in *Salon*, Susan Kushner Resnick—a former writer of the "Hers" column in the *New York Times* magazine and author of a book about her own post-partum depression—declared sympathy for Yates on the grounds that she, too, had entertained taboo thoughts about her own infant son. ("The baby was the size of a chicken," she explained. "What if I put him in the oven?")

In such callousness, as in much else, it was the gore-transfixed Simone de Beauvoir who first set the tone, both conceptually (she believed that the act of killing through abortion admitted women to full humanity) and aesthetically, in the contemptuous terms ("that thing in the womb," "that thing being fed with her blood") with which she reconfigured the world for many women. Who could fail to hear echoes of de Beauvoir, for example, in Molly Yard, who declared of China's policy of compulsory abortion, "I consider the

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You'll start your program by learning about the new "gold standard" in early detection that's **making PSA tests obsolete!**

Your next step is to remove cancer's secret "food supply." Yes, just like anything else that grows, cancer needs sources of nourishment. So it only makes sense to eliminate these newly discovered **secret tumor triggers**.

Scientists have uncovered new clues about the *causes* of prostate cancer, but this urgent information hasn't reached patients yet! But from now on, *you'll* be avoiding them or blocking their effects.

Then it's time to attack any tumors that may already exist. This is the one area where your doctor is probably concentrating most...and don't get me wrong, I'm *not* trying to upset the apple cart here. But I'll bet he's already encouraged you to read up on your therapy. You and your doctor are a team! If he's good, he wants you to be involved. And, as you'll see, in the last few years alone...

Conventional therapy has leaped light-years ahead. So much so, that literature published just last year can be useless or much worse. For example, right now I'm looking at a best-seller from my local bookstore that claims to be the last word in prostate cancer treatment. It confidently states that *radical prostate surgery* is your safest, surest cure. But did you know...?

* **Only 4% of English urologists** still favor radical prostate surgery...
* **A Dartmouth University study** now declares it of "questionable value" for many men...

And new surgical techniques are yielding better results in many cases, with fewer side-effects. Like the new laser surgery that's virtually pain-free and doesn't even cause bleeding. Or the *cryosurgery* breakthrough that can have you home the next day, *with your potency intact*.

Doesn't this sound like stuff *you* should know about?

Then, if your doctor has suggested any kind of *radiation therapy*...**learn about the revolution in radiation**.

It's a similar story here. Radiation "seeding" used to be the cutting edge, but new technologies may yield even better results. And you'll discover which may be right for you.

And if you're considering hormone treatments, there's a lot of great news on this front. Older techniques can shrink your scrotum and enlarge your breasts. Newer ones don't, yet they starve tumors so completely, they're even proving effective for later-stage prostate cancer.

Then, if your condition warrants it, you'll learn how to **upgrade your conventional cancer-fighting program** with cutting-edge immune-boosting therapies. You'll learn if they're right for you, and if so, how to incorporate them into your program. Sure, maybe you *don't* need them -- but find out. Your life could depend on it!

Plus you'll learn how to *double* the cancer-fighting power of everything else you may already be doing, by beefing up your body's natural defense forces:

No matter what you're already doing, don't ignore the NEWEST NATURAL THERAPIES

Many of these are so effective and safe, they're truly a no-brainer. Evidence mounts that they do much more than simply attack the cancer. They can also *multiply* the benefits of conventional therapy...and assure that tumors never crop up anywhere again. No wonder so many traditional doctors are busily boning up on this formerly forbidden area.

But chances are your doctor is still pretty new to this entire field. So you've got to help him work the best ones into your battle plan.

Next, you'll find out *how to combine* all the best of these vitamins, minerals, herbs, plus some key fatty acids and other nutrients -- into *the ultimate prevention and cancer-defense program*. And if there's only one part of the book you follow, make it this one, my friend! Because, even if you've already wiped out the cancer in your body, we want to *keep* you cancer-free for the rest of your long life.

Yes, the battle against prostate cancer *can* feel overwhelming...and that's exactly how it defeats many men. *But you're not going to be one of them*. Because this book will help you *make sense* out of chaos and put you back in charge.

It's called ***How to Fight Prostate Cancer and Win***. Brand-new and fully updated, it's the latest edition of the all-time classic by famed health reporter William L. Fischer. And whether you're actively fighting cancer or want to ensure you never get it, this blockbuster book is a must-see. Because...**researchers have come a long, long way in just a few short years**.

And this is the book with the very latest, lifesaving information. Just one of these discoveries could tip the odds decisively in your favor...and together, they bring a power to bear beyond the scope of any single therapy.

You'll be getting the straight story, with no sugar-coating. Because William L. Fischer has no ax to grind for either traditional *or* complementary medicine. He's famous in medical circles for his even-handed, objective approach. He lays out *all* the latest facts in easy-to-understand language -- and provides statistical details that your doctor will appreciate.

So how about it? Are you ready to win your fight against cancer? Every moment counts now. So why wait another minute?

Order your copy today and we'll rush you ***How to Fight Prostate Cancer and Win*** to use in *your* war against cancer. Just let it do what it's already done for so many thousands of men. I promise you'll soon feel a difference -- full of energy and hope for a long, healthy future. Or simply return it in 60 days and you'll get your money back, with no questions asked. So what have you got to lose?

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Chinese government's policy among the most intelligent in the world"? Or in the vigorously pro-abortion Katha Pollitt, arguing repeatedly that the unborn are just too small to be morally significant? Or in Susan Faludi, whose *Backlash* put the word "eyes" in quotation marks when speaking of a fetus—as if there were anything else those organs could be called? Or in the white-knuckled defense by "women's rights" organizations of late-term abortions—procedures that even the pro-choice Daniel Patrick Moynihan has pronounced "too close to infanticide"? Or in the continuing feminist preoccupation that there are somehow *not enough* abortions in America today?

For that matter, who can fail to hear echoes of such inhumanity even in Naomi Wolf, over on the softer flank of the slippery slope, who closed her *New Republic* essay six years ago with a sepulchral paean to "the blood of the desperate and the unpreventable and accidental and the medically necessary and the violently conceived abortions. This is blood that the doctors and clinic workers often see clearly, and that they heroically rinse and cause to flow and rinse again. And they take all our sins, the pro-choice as well as the pro-life among us, upon themselves." Is it really hard to see why someone who can sign her name to such words will insist years later, in a book about her own maternity, on the theoretical dispensability of her very own fetus—even as she "cherished that nose and those hands"?

The dirty little secret of the mommy wars, perhaps the last genuine secret left to excavate from that cultural pit, is that most women do not talk and think about motherhood and babies, born or unborn, the way Wolf and other contemporary feminists do. Whether they consider themselves pro-life or pro-choice is beside the point. Most women do not revel in the bloody details of "reproductive choice"; most do not think of themselves as potential child abusers and killers; and most do not experience pregnancy and childbirth and motherhood as personal catastrophes.

But our pro-choice activists, our orthodox feminists, *do*—from the troops who woman the battlefronts of NOW and NARAL and Emily's List, to the aging ghouls who flaunt their own children's pacifiers as they march for the destruction of other people's babies. What it would take to truly satisfy these souls is something that—fortunately enough—we may never know.

This much, however, is plain: Three decades after *Roe* v. *Wade* was handed down, there is no mistaking the connection between what the high priestesses of abortion believe about disposability of the human fetus, and the turmoil that motherhood itself unleashes in them.

The incessant sacralization of their favorite rite has done more than harden our feminists toward what it is they kill. It has also deformed their view of the babies and children that fetuses become. ♦

Creeley in His Time

The beat doesn't go on.

BY THOMAS M. DISCH

Poor Robert Creeley. Few poets can have led a drabber or more justly disgruntled life, winning a position at the very top of the B-list of his generation—only to be rewarded by a biography riddled with betrayals.

Born in 1926, Creeley was blinded in his left eye at the age of two and lost his father soon thereafter. The family income plummeted from Dr. Creeley's $30,000 a year to Nurse Creeley's $3,000. In grade school he had to wear canvas straps to correct bad posture, and his glass eye would fall out from time to time. Despite frequent absences due to illness, his grades were just good enough to win him a scholarship to Holderness, a New Hampshire prep school, where he scraped through with an average sufficient to leverage his way into Harvard in 1943. He didn't play sports, was in poor health, smoked incessantly, and was a precocious drunk.

Robert Creeley
A Biography
by Ekbert Faas
University Press of New England,
513 pp., $35

Thomas M. Disch is the author of two books of poetry criticism: The Castle of Indolence *(1995) and the forthcoming* The Castle of Perseverance: Job Opportunities in Contemporary Poetry.

From this inauspicious beginning, Robert Creeley continued on a level course. For decades, all his victories as Beat poetry's coolest cat were in literature's equivalent to the Special Olympics, and the biography he has now received from Ekbert Faas is perhaps no better than he deserved. Even so, *Robert Creeley: A Biography* must be reckoned the oddest authorized life ever authored. It is as little flattering to its subject as the picture of Dorian Gray, detailing Creeley's every wart and blemish: the petty spites, lifelong envies, vengeful adulteries, sneaky betrayals, and chronic alcoholism. Further, Faas does this in a style that is the literary equivalent of barroom maundering. Here is Faas's account of Martin Seymour-Smith, one of Creeley's many benefactor-*cum*-mortal enemies:

> Interim relations of a more business-like kind had confirmed Creeley's sense that Martin was the most deceitful, malign, and tale-bearing little prick imaginable. . . . Rather than from his father, a plain, sober, serious, and likable sort of man, Martin's problems derived from his mother. Acting the fading lily but a bitch at heart, she had trained her son to pay

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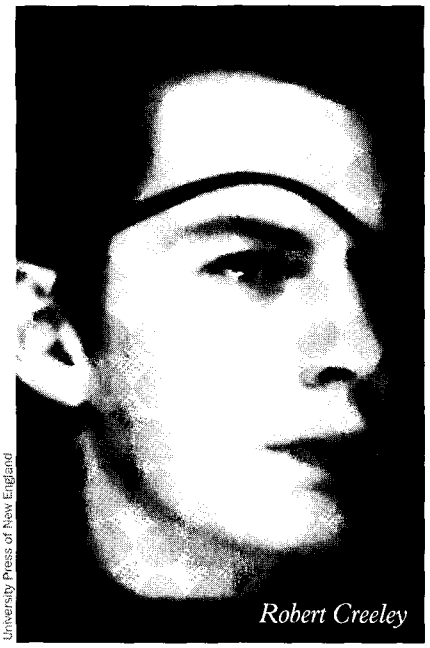
her all the expected compliments, and in the process jammed his head with deceit, contempt for honesty, and similar attitudes. What a hell of a mess she had made of Martin's brain!

An accompanying press release offers the lame excuse for such rant (and there is much of it, some unquotably more foul-mouthed) that it represents "a formally experimental narrative technique to capture the energy and chaos of Creeley's early life. Having steeped himself in Creeley's own letters and other writings, Faas has drawn on the poet's language and distinctive modes of expression to convey the poet's own subjective experience." In other words, all the barbarities and solecisms can be blamed on Creeley, whether or not Faas has troubled to use quotation marks.

The biographer performs another, more notable disservice in simply dispensing with the last thirty-five years of Creeley's life and work. He does not merely dismiss the many volumes of poetry Creeley published after 1966, but denounces them: "Creeley's recent touting of the commonplace as the closest, yet admittedly trite analogue to the stripped-down, de-anthropomorphised objectivity of the earlier work points to a more general lapse into the sentimentally self-reflective and banal. Being 'devoid of originality or novelty; trite, trivial, hackneyed,' to this older Creeley has become a badge worn with pride or at least ostentatiousness." Has any authorized biographer ever offered such expressions of ill will?

One final insult is the inclusion, as a kind of appendix, of the memoirs and diary of Creeley's first wife, Ann MacKinnon. Its more than one hundred artless pages—a quarter of the book—are a welcome corrective to Faas's scurrilous and helter-skelter chronicle, which suggests that Creeley had married Ann for her money, a $185-a-month trust fund. Seen through Ann's eyes, the marriage was not all abuse, neglect, and infidelity, but just the usual set of 1950s whiskey-soaked tales of wine and roses, with the difference that it was conducted not in suburbia but among the penniless expatriates of Majorca.

The wonder of Creeley's life is that he parlayed an exiguous literary talent into a secure position in the literary canon. Faas chronicles the literary politicking that helped Creeley achieve that end—the logrolling and petty revenges in the world of little magazines; the alliances among the Bohemian Establishment of the 1950s, especially with Cid Corman, Charles Olson, and Kenneth Rexroth (whose wife Marthe ran off with Creeley); his association with Black Mountain College just as it went belly-up in 1954.


University Press of New England

Robert Creeley

However, in all these key matters, other authors have given more persuasive accounts. For Creeley's affair with Marthe, Linda Hamalian's *Life of Kenneth Rexroth* is much to be preferred, as is Tom Clark's biography, *Charles Olson*, while Martin Duberman's *Black Mountain* gives a far more reliable account of that omphalos of the anti-establishment.

What Faas cannot account for, because he ends his book in 1966, is how Creeley's reputation was solidified after he first came to prominence in Donald M. Allen's landmark anthology, *The New American Poetry 1945-1960*. There does not yet exist a knowledgeable and nonpartisan literary history of how the counterculture became canonical. That the original manuscript of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* should go at auction for multiple millions, as it recently did, is surely the capstone. But that such a book as Faas's *Robert Creeley* should be published at all is no less astonishing.

A person may lead a thoroughly reprehensible life and yet have written things worth reading. That was true of Villon and Rimbaud—and it is also true, to a much lesser degree, of Robert Creeley. His one novel, *The Island*, is of interest now only for its fictionalized portraits of real-life figures, and that interest has faded almost to extinction, since the only characters with any lingering cachet are the ones based on Robert Graves and Creeley's own egregiously flattering self-portrait. His shorter fiction is flat-footed, and his critical pronouncements are typical Beatnik boilerplate. I can't resist offering a specimen of the Creeley *ars poetica*: "The means of a poetry are, perhaps, related to Pound's sense of the *increment of association*; usage coheres value. Tradition is an aspect of what anyone is now thinking—not what someone once thought. We make with what we have, and in this way anything is worth looking at."

So, Creeley must be valued for his poetry—or scrapped for it. I confess that at the time of *For Love* (1962) and *Words* (1967) I had a high regard for him as the heir to William Carlos Williams's minimalist aesthetic and the author of such zeitgeistful poems as "The Dishonest Mailmen":

They are taking all my letters, and they
put them into a fire.
I see the flames, etc.
But do not care, etc.

They burn everything I have, or what little
I have. I don't care, etc.

The poem supreme, addressed to
emptiness—this is the courage

necessary. This is something
quite different.

But rereading Creeley's poetry in connection with Faas's biography I have become skeptical. I begin to think

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that the ones who benefit most from a policy of scrupulous minimalism are those who don't know how to decorate: Paint the walls white, strip the floor, furnish the bare space with futons and pine-plank bookcases—and maintain an enigmatic silence by which one may come in time to have a reputation for depth.

For all that, Creeley does offer *something* to chew on. Helen Vendler, writing in 1977 in the *Yale Review*, has given the most just, if hedged, appreciation of what that something may be. Creeley, she suggests, "remains so much a follower of Williams, without Williams's rebelliousness, verve, and social breadth, that his verse seems, though intermittently attractive, fatally pinched. . . . In Creeley . . . things are wasted, faded, faint, trembling, wavering, blurred, darkening; the scale is miniature, the dimensions fragile."

Faint praise, but posterity is not likely to offer any more fulsome. This is a product whose date has expired. ♦

Popes and Jews

Truths and Falsehoods in the history of Catholic-Jewish relations. BY DAVID G. DALIN

Over the past few years, Catholic-Jewish relations and the role of the popes in European anti-Semitism have been the subject of what seems like innumerable books. Most of these anti-papal diatribes—by John Cornwall, Garry Wills, and others—have focused their attacks on the alleged silence during the Holocaust of Pius XII, who has been vilified as "Hitler's Pope." In *The Popes Against the Jews*, however, the Brown University historian David Kertzer skips over Pius XII to attack the entire modern papacy from 1814 to 1939.

The Popes Against the Jews
The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism
by David I. Kertzer
Knopf, 355 pp., $27.95

That some popes, both medieval and modern, were anti-Jewish is a matter of historical fact. The most notorious papal action in modern times was the 1858 kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara, a six-year-old Jewish boy in the papal state of Bologna, about which Kertzer, a specialist in nineteenth-century Italian history, wrote a book in 1997. On the instructions of Pope Pius IX, Edgardo was forcibly removed from his parents' home after one of the Mortaras' Catholic servants told authorities about secretly baptizing the boy.

As it happens, no papal action in modern times precipitated as widespread and outraged a public reaction, even among Catholics, as did the Mortara kidnapping, a point which Kertzer himself documented in his earlier book. But what's more to the point—and contrary to the underlying thesis of Kertzer's new volume—Pius IX's action in the Mortara case was tragically unique, rather than historically representative of the papacy.

Beginning during the fourteenth century, a tradition of papal support for the Jews of Europe began to emerge. Kertzer and other recent papal critics have largely missed this "philo-Semitic" tradition. By portraying Catholic-Jewish relations as a history of the popes against the Jews, alleging that the papacy has played a disproportionate role in the rise of modern anti-Semitism, Kertzer ignores the fact that during periods of intensified anti-Semitic persecutions several popes served as protectors of Jewry—especially of the Jews of Rome—upholding the Jewish right to worship freely in their synagogues and publicly defending Jews against a host of anti-Semitic allegations.

Thus, for example, Kertzer devotes three chapters to the horrifying allegation that, during the Passover holiday, Jews engaged in the ritual murder of Christian children, to use their blood in the baking of the unleavened bread eaten at the Passover meal. Yet he makes little mention of the relevant fact that a succession of popes since the twelfth century (when the accusation of Jewish ritual murder was first made) were vocal in their condemnation of this libel. In 1247 Pope Innocent IV promulgated the first of several papal bulls devoted to refuting the ritual-murder libel.

Innocent's bull set an important precedent that subsequent popes would follow over the centuries. As the historian Marc Saperstein has pointed out, whenever "charges of ritual murder were brought to the attention of popes, they regularly condemned them as baseless and inconsistent with Jewish religious teaching." In 1758, in response to an appeal from the Jewish community of Poland, Pope Benedict XIV appointed Cardinal Lorenzo Ganganelli (who would later become Pope Clement XIV) to investigate the ritual-murder accusation. After investigating for more than a year, Cardinal Ganganelli produced a report that exonerated the Jews—a document Cecil Roth, a preeminent scholar of Italian Jewish history, has called "one of the most remarkable, broad-minded, and humane documents in the history of the Catholic Church."

This historic report was later cited by Pope Pius X, who repudiated the "infamous fanaticism" of the ritual-murder charge. Indeed, despite Kertzer's suggestions, the charge of ritual murder was not supported by Pope Pius X, who publicly denounced the accusation in the most famous ritual-murder case of modern times, the 1913 trial of the Russian Jew Mendel Beilis.

A rabbi and historian, David G. Dalin is the author of six books. His essay "Pius XII and the Jews" appeared in the February 26, 2001, issue of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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While Kertzer is correct in arguing that some Catholic priests and newspapers lent their support to the libel, the papacy persistently opposed it.

It's this kind of selective use of evidence that is the most annoying feature of *The Popes Against the Jews*. Time and time again, Kertzer fails to cite or discuss statements and actions that reveal a pope's public opposition to anti-Semitism or defense of the Jewish people. Thus, for example, he never mentions that Leo XIII spoke out in *defense* of Captain Alfred Dreyfus, the French Jewish officer accused of treason in 1894, and publicly condemned the anti-Semitic campaign against him—a fact noted by the British historian Owen Chadwick in his definitive *A History of the Popes, 1830-1914* (a volume never quoted by Kertzer). And while Kertzer does acknowledge that in 1892—two years before the Dreyfus Affair began—Leo XIII strongly defended Jews in a widely circulated newspaper interview, he buries it in a footnote and tries to minimize its significance.

Kertzer similarly indulges a one-sided and incomplete discussion of Benedict XV, who was more favorably disposed to the Jews than many of his nineteenth-century predecessors. Far from sanctioning anti-Semitism, Benedict XV powerfully condemned it in a 1916 statement issued in response to a petition from the American Jewish Committee that asked the pope to protest the persecution of Polish Jews during World War I.

Kertzer's indictment of Pius XI is equally compromised by his selective citations of the available evidence, as well as by serious errors of fact. Monsignor Achille Ratti, the future Pius XI, enjoyed warm relations with Italian Jewish leaders throughout the early years of his priesthood. And during his tenure as papal nuncio after World War I in Poland, amid Europe's largest Jewish population, he confronted for the first time the persecution experienced by Europe's Jews.

This firsthand encounter led the future pope—contrary to what Kertzer asserts—to denounce Polish anti-Semitism. Ratti's disgust with Polish anti-Semitism is amply documented in Sir William Clonmore's biography, *Pope Pius XI and World Peace* (yet another volume Kertzer never cites). "Ratti made it quite clear," notes Clonmore, "that any anti-Semitic outbursts would be severely condemned by the Holy See." Ratti helped the Jewish victims of Polish anti-Semitism in a more tangible way as well: Instructed by Pope Benedict to direct the distribution of Catholic relief in postwar Poland, he gave considerable funds not only to Catholics but also to impoverished Jews who had lost their homes and businesses in the pogroms.

From this bad beginning, Kertzer moves to a worse conclusion as he turns to Ratti's reign as Pius XI. Unmentioned is the fact that as early

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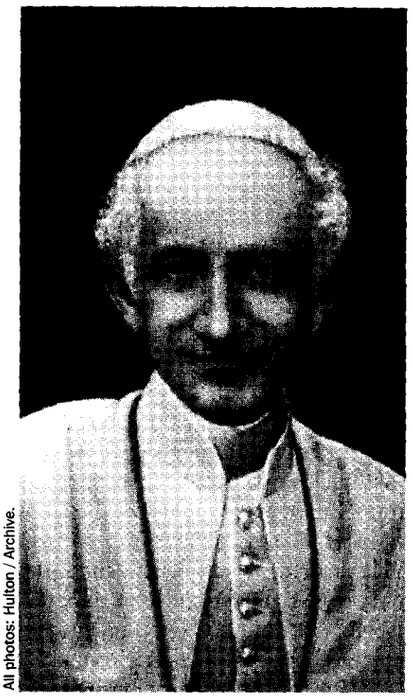

All photos: Hulton / Archive.

Leo XIII (c. 1870), Benedict XV (c. 1915), and Pius XI (1922).

as November 1931, the chief rabbi of Milan, on a personal visit to the Vatican, thanked the pope for his appeals against anti-Semitism and his continuing support for Italy's Jews. *The Popes Against the Jews* devotes astonishingly little attention to Pius XI's famous anti-Nazi encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* ("With Burning Anxiety"), issued in March 1937, which produced an angry response from the Nazi leaders in Berlin, who viewed it (correctly) as a pro-Jewish document.

Kertzer's nearly monomaniacal effort to turn everything against the popes will prove at last unbearable even for readers who have little sympathy for the Catholic Church. That there were anti-Semitic Catholics in Europe between 1814 to 1939, no one denies. That their anti-Semitism provided one of the channels through which the evil of the Nazis would find its way—this too is undeniable, a horrifying fact that the current pope, John Paul II, and the modern Catholic Church have begun at last to try to understand.

But what, exactly, is gained by Kertzer's attempts to twist history to his own absolute anti-papalism? What new understanding do we achieve by denouncing as anti-Semites some of the *least* anti-Semitic people of their time?

Benedict XV and Pius XI were known by their contemporaries as opponents of anti-Semitism and friends to the Jews. So, for instance, on September 6, 1938, Pius XI remarked to a group of Belgian pilgrims that anti-Semitism "is a hateful movement, a movement that we cannot, as Christians, take any part in." And, with tears in his eyes as he thought about the plight of the Jews, he famously concluded: "Anti-Semitism is inadmissible; spiritually, we are all Semites." This wasn't said in 1998, when it would be of little moment. It was said in 1938, when the most powerful nation in Europe had an officially anti-Semitic government and was poised only a few hundred miles to the north of Rome. Who could miss what this meant at the time?

Pius XI's contemporaries didn't miss it. After the publication of *Mit brennender Sorge* the Nazis launched a vitriolic counterattack on the "Jew-God and His deputy in Rome"—while the February 1939 issue of B'nai B'rith's *National Jewish Monthly* featured the pope on its cover. "Regardless of their personal religious beliefs," wrote the editors, "men and women everywhere who believe in democracy and the rights of man have hailed the firm and uncompromising stand of Pope Pius XI against Fascist brutality, paganism and racial theories. In his annual Christmas message to the College of Cardinals, the great Pontiff vigorously denounced Fascism of both the Italian and German varieties . . . and described the Nazi swastika as a 'cross hostile to the cross of Christ' . . . . The first international voice in the world to be raised in stern condemnation of the ghastly injustice perpetrated upon the Jewish people by brutal tyrannies was Pope Pius XI."

In his effort to vilify the modern papacy—and to hold each and every pontiff responsible for all anti-Semitism from Napoleon to Hitler—Kertzer must dismiss or ignore the many instances of papal support for the Jews and the legacies of those modern popes who were known for their decidedly philo-Semitic policies and pronouncements. Worse, he must dismiss or ignore the testimony of those who were actually there at the time. Kertzer's *The Popes Against the Jews* is both false and unpersuasive. ♦

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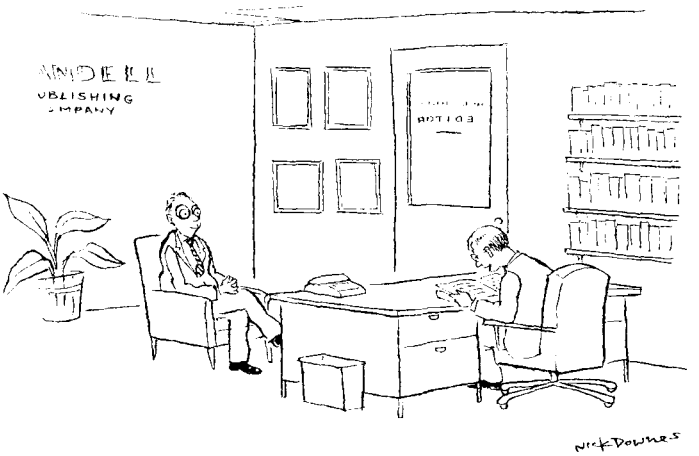

"I like the narrator's omniscient, fisheye-lens view of events."

Life Goes On

Over a dozen readers sent in to THE STANDARD READER articles about Emmanuel Asare, cleaning man and unwitting art critic, who, tidying a London gallery on Oct. 16, bagged as trash an expensive installation by Damien Hirst. Of course, Asare was helped by the fact that it was garbage—literally: used cups, dirty ashtrays, candy wrappers, and newspapers spread across the floor. But the cleaner nonetheless deserves credit. Hirst has gained headlines and wealth by immersing sheep, sharks, and cows in formaldehyde, and calling the result art. At last someone sees his work for what it is.

Meanwhile, other readers clipped the *Philadelphia Inquirer* interview with Harvard professor Cornel West, whose music CD, *Sketches of My Culture*, is about to appear. "It's another medium. And I'm excited to be part of the black-music tradition," said West. Everything from missiles to canned goods is being sold these days by reference to the events of Sept. 11, but West's attempt at promoting sales deserves notice. "We can gain great insight from a blues people," he explained. "Especially now, as a whole country has the blues."

Spot something THE STANDARD READER should note? E-mail it to *standardreader@weeklystandard.com*. ♦

Book of the Week

Fanon the Flames

His hour comes around again. **BY J. BOTTUM**

Frantz Fanon: A Biography by David Macey (Picador, 416 pp., $40)

Can a book miss its moment so badly it actually curves back into relevance? Take David Macey's *Frantz Fanon*, a recent biography of the black psychiatrist from Martinique who, sent by his colonial masters to run a mental hospital in Algiers, became the intellectual cheerleader for the Algerian revolt against the French. Does anyone still remember those halcyon 1960s days when Fanon loomed large for the American Left?

R.D. Laing's *The Politics of Experience*, Herbert Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man*: High on the list of such forgotten tomes is Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*—with its once-notorious introduction by Jean-Paul Sartre, which declared, "Shooting a European means killing two birds with one stone, doing away with oppressor and oppressed at one and the same time: There remain a dead man and a free man."

Fanon wanted an Algerian nation severed from the "sickness of Europe" and an Algerian people who had overcome through violence the psychological restraints induced by their colonizers. He died in 1961 at 36 and didn't live to see the result of his theory of therapeutic murder or of his claim that America is Europe's sickness made manifest.

Macey hasn't done a bad job of biography, and the Fanon who emerges is valuable as a marker for that moment in the early 1960s when European Marxists made common cause with Third World anti-colonialists—turning revolutionary doctrine from an economic theory to an *anti*-economic dogma. Fanon's name ought to have survived in America as the shorthand way of explaining how racial victim groups displaced the proletariat in the iconography of the Left.

But one has to move outside the West to find Fanon's thought still fully alive. In his 1990 *Atlantic* essay "The Roots of Muslim Rage," Bernard Lewis noted Islamic radicals' embrace of the anti-Westernism of high European philosophers. Daniel Pipes, in a 1995 *First Things* article "The Western Mind of Radical Islam," pointed out the number of terrorists educated in the West.

Of the intellectual threads that led to the attack on Sept. 11, an extraordinary number were present in the Paris of the 1950s existentialists—where they were gathered up in an incoherent but lethal combination and offered to the Middle East in *The Wretched of the Earth*. It was when the hijacked airplanes came smashing into New York and Washington that the faded Frantz Fanon returned to relevance. ♦

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Not a Parody

AP/Wide World Photos: President Bush with Jiang Zemin of China at the APEC summit in Shanghai, October 21, 2001

"It was twenty years ago today, Sgt. Pepper taught the band to play."

the weekly Standard
November 5, 2001

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The Legacy of Class Hatred

Rick Geddes is an associate professor of economics at Fordham University and a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

A widespread view in American academia today condemns antipathy directed at individuals because of their membership in particular groups but praises hostility to other disfavored groups. **Group aversion directed at a particular race is, for example, quite correctly denounced, yet hostility toward the economically affluent continues to be lauded.** An assessment of group hatred based on race versus class, however, suggests that the two are remarkably similar. Both rely on the identification and classification of people by categories. Both condemn a person not for any crime perpetrated by an individual but for his or her group identity. Both promote an "us versus them" mentality. Both have been manipulated by the state to extend its power. And both have been used to justify appalling violence against the disfavored group, resulting in humanity's worst genocides.

R. J. Rummel, a political science professor at the University of Hawaii, assembled the world's most extensive set of statistics on government-sponsored genocide. His data indicate that totalitarian regimes, relying on Marxist class-based hatred, were among the most murderous known to humanity. Stalin, for example, murdered approximately 55 million of his fellow citizens, while the Communist Chinese murdered about 35 million. Rummel's tally for Nazi Germany is 21 million. Consistent with Rummel's data, the *Black Book of Communism* states that at least 100 million people were murdered by communist regimes. Indeed, racial and class hatred were often effectively used together as political tools. Witness Hitler's attacks on "wealthy Jews."

Although genocide, in some cases, was undoubtedly motivated by a combination of racial and class hatred, that is certainly less true of the Communist Chinese. Moreover, Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, motivated purely by class-based hatred, instigated genocide unparalleled in human history when measured as a percentage of the population. The Khmer Rouge used novel indicators of class, such as wearing eyeglasses, to identify its victims.

Class hatred may, in some ways, be even more pernicious than racial hatred. The damage from racism is limited by the availability of victims in that group. With classism, however, the group targeted for persecution can easily be redefined according to political necessity, as was frequently done by Stalin and Mao. Moreover, hatred based on relative affluence provides an immediate justification for the state to confiscate property, thus enhancing its appeal.

If the notion of hate speech places constraints on the language used in public discussion, it must certainly be applied to hatred based on class as well. Yet even with such a monstrous history, it is unlikely that classism will soon take its place alongside racism as an instrument of evil. It retains a patina of legitimacy since it is consistent with the views of many American academics. The fact that it continues to be used as a political tool without outcry from intellectuals is a sad commentary on our distorted state of historical understanding.

— Rick Geddes

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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